The Pelray Democrat

www.thedelraydemocrat.com

October 2022

VOTE

As If Your Democracy Depends On It—Because It Does

As If Your Planet Depends On It—Because It Does

As If Your Life Depended On It—Because It Might

Also in This Issue

What's It All About? 3	
Hurricane Ian Brings the Day of Judgment	
to America 3	
The Founders and the Constitution 4	
Atonement 5	
This Year Is Different 6	
What We're Reading 7	
Membership 8	
Scan below to read online:	



The Once and Future Governor

Michael K. Cantwell

Shortly after Charlie Crist announced his candidacy to occupy an office he'd held more than a decade earlier, I <u>suggested</u> he could be Florida's Joe Biden.

At that time, President Biden was off to the strongest start of any president since Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and even Republican columnists were calling him a <u>transformational president</u>. Within months, however, news coverage shifted from Biden's still unrivaled record on job creation, unemployment reduction, and GDP growth to "all inflation all the time," and the comparison became one better avoided than trumpeted.

Indeed, as soon as Crist won his party's nomination, Ron DeSantis began flooding the airwaves with ads linking Crist to Biden, despite his hypocritical.attempts to take credit for funds made available to Floridians through Biden's American Rescue Plan Act. After Biden's surge in popularity in late summer, however, the So-Called Liberal Media began looking for a new narrative, and shamelessly seem to have settled on the "Republican Rebound."

Regardless of Biden's impact on Crist's campaign, the parallels between the two men are powerful and potentially predictive. Most fundamental is that Crist, like Biden, is a decent, competent man running against an indecent, incompetent narcissist. The race between Crist and DeSantis is a race between a mensch and a miscreant.

As governor, Crist demonstrated his decency and humanity by restoring the rights of 155,000 Floridians permanently disenfranchised by a prior felony conviction. As a Republican, it wasn't in his political interest to do so because the former offenders were disproportionately people of color. (Permanently disenfranchising the formerly enslaved was precisely the intent of the Post–Civil War amendment to the Florida Constitution.) In his four years in office, Crist granted clemency to twice as many Floridians as Jeb Bush and 50 times as many as Rick Scott, each of whom served eight years.

In sharp contrast, DeSantis delights in indecency and cruelty. He bullied a schoolchild whose mother was

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

immunocompromised into removing his mask, he sent a SWAT team to serve a warrant to seize the computers of a scientist who was fired from her government position after claiming she had been asked to manipulate coronavirus data, and he removed a democratically elected state attorney, dispatching an armed guard to escort him from his government office. Most recently, he duped Venezuelan immigrants seeking amnesty into boarding a plane for Martha's Vineyard with the false claim that jobs awaited them and without notifying local authorities. This cheap political stunt may also have broken human trafficking laws.

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. Notwithstanding an evenly split Senate and a mere five-vote majority in the House, Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act within six weeks of his inauguration, propelling the economy to record increases in jobs and an unemployment rate not seen since 1969. Last month, he signed legislation that not only represents America's largest investment in combatting climate change but also will substantially reduce the price Americans pay for pharmaceuticals.

Crist, like Biden, is a decent, competent man running against an indecent, incompetent narcissist. The race between Crist and DeSantis is a race between a mensch and a miscreant.

Most of all, like Trump, DeSantis seems to delight in himself. His narcissism, unselfconsciously displayed in his "Top Gov" campaign ad, drew comparisons to Michael Dukakis's tank top photo while evoking contempt from actual fighter pilots.

Biden and Crist were prematurely branded as losers. Biden twice failed to capture his party's nomination for president, and Crist twice failed to win statewide elections after leaving the governor's office and the Republican Party in 2010. Yet Biden was elected president in 2020. And in 2016, Crist flipped a Congressional district that had been Republican for 60 years, a seat he subsequently defended twice.

In between Biden made good on his promise that bipartisanship was not dead, however quixotic that sounded to most observers. In addition to signing the infrastructure bill that had eluded his two predecessors, he presided over passage of 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 look forward to similar achievements from Charlie when our once and future governor returns to Tallahassee in the time of our greatest need.

The Delray Democrat is the official publication of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach. The views and opinions expressed in the articles herein are their authors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach or the Democratic Party, nor is this publication authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. The copyrights are owned by the respective authors but the articles may be copied and redistributed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International license.

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

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.

What's It All About?

Steve Fradkin

It's not about ideology. It's not even about money. It's bigger than that. More critical than the issues of the day, or even of the century.

It's about power.

It's always been about power, but the power has generally been used to make changes within the structure and values of the United States of America.

Now, though, the power they seek is to dismantle the structure of our precious nation, and refashion it into one that reflects their values. A totalitarian aristocracy.

They have been taking steps to harness that power, and their damage has already begun to take shape. Banned reproductive rights. Banned books. Banned speech. Replacing elections

officials with their own, arresting people for voting, passing laws to restrict the democratic process at every turn. They use children as political stepping stones, and are stripping away the rights and freedoms our nation has endowed us with.

No, this isn't your typical midterm US election cycle. This is a fight for our very survival as a democratic nation. This is it. The usual tactics and techniques aren't going to do it this time, because the other side is ravenous for what they see as a chink in our armor.

Shout it out, those who care about freedom! Shout it louder, and wider. The neo-fascist GOP is a clear and present danger, and they're closing in on America. We don't just want to win; we HAVE to win.

Hurricane Ian Brings the Day of Judgment to America

Rabbi Barry Silver

Mother Earth has brought Judgment Day to America as Hurricane Ian slams into our coast with a vengeance and warns of even greater catastrophes if we fail to atone for our environmental sins. Ripping through the Southeast between the Jewish Day of Judgment and the Day of Atonement, Ian has delivered nature's fatal decree upon our species for desecrating our precious planet and only home.

Hurricane Ian admonishes us "Don't continue to overpopulate the planet, leave some open space for other species, don't pave over wetlands, the lungs of the earth, don't burn down the rainforests and let me breathe." Ignoring ominous signs and portents, we continue to dump CO2 and methane into the atmosphere, destroy nature and place large centers of human population in vulnerable areas, while Neanderthals among us shout "burn baby burn". As a result, our oceans reach 90 degrees, which fuels superstorms, while many still wonder why such disasters occur with increasing regularity.

"Myth-guided" religion has seized the reins of power to deny women bodily autonomy and force them to bring more children into an already overcrowded world with compelled childbirth that threatens their lives and bodies. As a result, the Book of Life has been cut short for many people, especially women, with chapters of destruction and devastation written on the pages of the survivors.

While a supernatural ruler in the sky is fantasy, the natural is super and an overheated sky is fatal. Although there is no father in the sky, Mother Nature is real and as the adage goes, cannot be fooled, even by the spin of FOX news, Republican distortions, and the ramblings of false prophets who "prey" upon, rather than "praying" for the gullible in the name of Jesus.

During these Days of Awe, we are urged to reconsider our actions and change our ways. Rather than arrogantly playing God in a vain effort to "conquer" nature, we must learn to live in humility and harmony with our fellow creatures. Hubris was the fatal sin of Greek and Hebrew mythology, and always ends in tragedy. Today's humans have arrogantly launched the Anthropocene Era, where humans choose which animals live and die based solely on whether they serve our needs. We have become the angel of death to billions of farm animals whose miserable lives are cut short only when the time has come to feed us with their bodies, as we

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

bring judgment upon ourselves with heart disease, cancer, environmental collapse and other ills caused by the abuse of animals.

Tragically, the indigenous people who could have taught us how to live in harmony with the land were wiped out by a vicious, malicious and avaricious genocide across the continent.

Today, we attempt to play God during the adolescence of our species, with the childish notion that despite our high-risk behavior, we are invulnerable and will live forever. Sadly, most religions feed into this delusion by trivializing life in this world with fantasies of a better world to come. Blinded by religious and political indoctrination, armies of the absurd, battalions of the2 brainwashed and legions of lunatics, elect charlatans who lead us into the abyss.

Political necessity has caused Governor DeSantis to have a "come to Biden moment", as he takes a pause from thoughts and prayers and breying against Washington to plea not to his heavenly father, but to his earthly "Uncle Sam" for salvation with federal funds. His mentor, Donald Trump, contributes nothing to this humanitarian relief as he is "too smart" to pay taxes and leaves it to working people to help those in need.

At this season of Judgment, let us judge those "polluticians" who fiddle while our forests burn, recklessly denying climate change "come hellish

fires or the high waters" of the oceans with lies that don't hold water.

Will we honor our father and mother, by using Father Time to save Mother Earth before it is too late? Or will we emulate Pharaoh, who was literally in "De Nile" refusing to acknowledge climate change as the waters of the Nile turned deadly, just as our oceans now bring death and destruction upon us? The only hope for our planet is a "sea change" in thinking and true atonement ("at one"ment) with all life.

To save our planet will require a spiritual transformation that goes way beyond useless prayers, meaningless rituals and empty fasts. In synagogues across the country, we read the words from the Torah "choose life" on Yom Kippur. For the sake of our children and future generations, may we take these words to heart.

The modern prophet Albert Einstein observed that science without religion is lame and religion without science is blind. Let us use both of these great revelations to unite the people of the world in a common quest to save our planet from ourselves with a glorious redemption of peace, love and harmony with our fellow creatures.

Rabbi Barry Silver is the founder of the Palm Beach County Environmental Coalition and Temple of Understanding, an abortion rights attorney, who serves Congregation L'Dor Va-Dor, which is suing Governor DeSantis over his antiabortion law, HB 5. As the only rabbi to have served in the Florida Legislature, State Representative Barry Silver was named the most effective environmental legislator by the Sierra Club. He can be reached at barryboca@aol.com.

How the Founders Viewed the Constitution

<u>Thomas Jefferson Letter to Henry Tompkinson</u> on Proposals to revise the Virginia Constitution (12 July 1816):

Some men look at Constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, & deem them, like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment.

I knew that age well: I belonged to it, and labored with it. It deserved well of it's country. It was very like the present, but without the experience of the present: and 40 years of experience in government is worth a century of book-reading: and this they would say themselves, were they to rise from the dead.

I am certainly not an advocate for frequent & untried changes in laws and constitutions. I think moderate imperfections had better be borne with; because when once known, we accommodate ourselves to them, and find practical means of correcting their ill effects.

But I know also that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilised society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors.

Atonement

Michael K. Cantwell

The past isn't dead; it's not even past.

William Faulkner

Whenever I'm subjected to Ron DeSantis's poisonous lies about Critical Race Theory, I'm reminded of a trip my wife and I took through Central Europe in 1984.

While in Prague, we visited an exhibit of artwork and poetry created by the children of the Terezin ghetto who were awaiting shipment to Auschwitz. It was inspiring to see the capacity of the human spirit to produce art amidst the most appalling evil. And it was devastating to see the life dates of each child identified under their work — none survived the war and none lived to see their teens.

Then we were struck by the sound of German being spoken. It came from a group of schoolchildren on a class trip to bear witness to some of the atrocities committed by their forbears. They were scarcely older than the children whose art they were viewing. It's impossible they would not have been profoundly disturbed by what they witnessed.

Of course, such a reawakening is exactly what happened after it was reported that the cemetery contained the graves of Waffen SS, the military arm of the organization most responsible for the Holocaust. Elie Wiesel implored Reagan to "do something else, to find another way, another site. That place, Mr. President, is not your place."

Reagan refused to cancel, opting instead to tack on a last-minute trip to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. He defended himself by claiming "history will prove I'm right. If we can't reconcile after forty years, we are never going to be able to do it."

Actually, history proved that the Germans who refused to deny their past were right. Reagan was ready to ignore the victims of the Holocaust, who were only belatedly added to the visit. And he made things worse by claiming that the Germans draftees who had died in the World War II "were victims, just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps."

Such an awakening would have violated the Florida law that DeSantis bumptiously refers to as the "Stop Woke Act" but is more appropriately labeled "The Snowflake Protection Act."

Such an awakening would have violated the Florida law that DeSantis bumptiously refers to as the "Stop Woke Act" but is more appropriately labeled "The Snowflake Protection Act." It riles up his troglodyte base and distracts them from asking the man who runs Florida like his personal fiefdom why homes, homeowners insurance, and apartments have become unaffordable under one-party Republican rule.

Keeping Floridians asleep, ignorant, even comatose, may win votes in the short term but is no way to prepare children for the world they will inherit. Only through knowledge of the past can reconciliation be achieved, as Ronald Reagan and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl unwittingly demonstrated the year after our harrowing visit to that museum in Prague.

As part of Europe-wide celebrations commemorating the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, Kohl proposed the two leaders lay a wreath at the German military cemetery in Bitburg, demonstrating reconciliation between the former enemies. Kohl suggested they visit a concentration camp, but Reagan demurred, saying he wanted to avoid "reawakening the passions of the time."

It was left to the German President, Richard von Weizsacker, in a speech for the ages delivered to the West German Parliament, to explain the relationship among guilt, remembrance, and reconciliation:

The vast majority of today's population were either children then or had not been born. They cannot profess a guilt of their own for crimes that they did not commit . . . But their forefathers have left them a grave legacy.

It is not a case of coming to terms with the past. That is not possible. It cannot be subsequently modified or made undone. However, anyone who closes his eyes to the past is blind to the present. Whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection.

The schoolchildren we met in Prague were having their eyes opened to the past, not being taught to be ashamed of being German. By attempting to blind Florida's schoolchildren to the past, DeSantis and his minions are blinding them to the present as well. They are not protecting them; rather they are adding to the grave legacy bequeathed them by infecting them anew with the inhumanity of racism.

Why This Year is Different

Rob Resnick

For as long as I have studied law and politics, I have consistently believed that in the grand scheme of things it didn't matter who appointed a judge, at least a federal judge.

Whether appointed by Reagan or Clinton (and all presidents prior to Donald Trump), the Senate screened federal judges to ensure they had the proper experience, education, temperament, judgment, and respect for the rule of law, avoiding the extremes.

Republican- and Democratic-appointed judges may follow different philosophies that lead them to different conclusions. However, all stayed reliably within the law and believed the law reinforced democracy. In other words, they might disagree on the outcome of a case, especially on controversial issues, but all based their decisions on the interests of the nation.

Enter Donald Trump to the White House and an unprecedented (hopefully never repeated) system of judicial appointments. While Trump nominated some judges with excellent credentials and who have performed to standard, that was not his main criteria or intent. Trump was not concerned with qualifications and certainly not with adherence to the rule of law or future of democracy. Instead, Trump was focused solely on personal fealty. He wanted to appoint as many judges as possible at all levels of the judiciary that would be primarily loyal to him, prepared to do his bidding in the face of any legal challenge or impediment he faced. He intended for these judges to put him above the law, to choose the MAGA agenda over the national interest, and to ignore their responsibilities to democracy when they conflicted with the Trump/MAGA push To them, the law was but autocracy. inconvenience, one they could cast aside as needed.

It is true that Republican appointed judges, including some Trump judges, dismissed his 2020 Election challenges. It is also true, however, that they had no choice because Trump's legal teams failed to produce an iota of evidence in any such case, which is why they were laughed out of court in every instance. The judges had no way to support those baseless, outrageous claims even if they were inclined to do so. Perhaps Trump seeking to steal the election was a step too far, even for sycophantic oriented judges he appointed. Let's hope their thresholds are much higher than that.

That brings us to Judge Aileen Cannon. Trump appointed this very young, under-experienced lawyer to the US District Court for the Southern District of Florida. After the search of Mar-a-Lago and after the Magistrate denied Trump much of the relief he sought, Trump's legal team forum shopped for a judge they believed would follow Trump's command of fealty over law and found their champion in Cannon. In multiple rulings concerning the search of Mar-a-Lago and DoJ review of the seized documents, Judge Cannon largely ignored the facts and ignored the law in favor of providing Trump what he wanted. It is possible that with her questionable credentials, she may not have understood the relevant law and procedure. It is just as likely she was being personally loyal to Trump.

However Cannon arose at her decisions in this case, respected jurists across the spectrum, liberal to conservative, even including some MAGA oriented commentators, soundly questioned the validity of the Cannon rulings. They all predicted that the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, also dominated by conservative jurists and Trump appointees, would overturn her rulings because they were so obviously incorrect and legally unsound. Her rulings demonstrated ignorance or perhaps improper motivation. Judge Cannon epitomizes Trump judicial appointees. This is the danger posed to the nation and our judiciary from the dramatic change in appointments under the Trump presidency.

Let me again stress the point that previous presidents, while appointing judges with philosophies in line with their own, strove overall to appoint qualified judges and judges whose primary allegiance was to the rule of law and the future of our functioning democracy. There were certainly plenty of mistakes...

The Special Master Cannon appointed, and who was agreed to by DoJ, was a Reagan appointee, but who had an excellent reputation and judicial record. In the past, it was not important to begin an analysis of a judge's performance with the question of who appointed the judge. Once on the bench, they were supremely loyal to the law. That should be the standard for Biden and all future president's appointments. But not Trump.

The Republican Senate quickly confirmed record numbers of Trump judges for 4 years. They cared

(Continued on page 7)

not that many had questionable experience or merit as federal judges. Elections have consequences and whoever wins the White House has the authority to appoint judges. We can only hope that every president would appoint the highest qualified individuals. Trump did not. Then Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was all too happy to ignore the Senate's responsibilities in the confirmation process. Yes, the president appoints and the Senate confirms. However, the confirmation process holds the Senate responsible for vetting all nominees to ensure they have the proper experience, tend away from the extremes, etc. McConnell, et al, bypassed the normal process and prevented proper vetting.

When the president appoints underqualified, even unqualified nominees, and the Senate confounds the matter by by-passing proper confirmation processes, we have a significant crisis in the judiciary. Judges serve for life and wield immense power in their decisions. It is far too important to allow unqualified individuals on the bench. The damage they do can last for generations. When presidents look for very young nominees to extend their likely time in the judiciary, they risk appointing underqualified individuals. When they do it intentionally, so as to avoid accountability because they lack judicial records, and to get individuals confirmed for nefarious purposes, it is extremely dangerous. The Trump record...

The 2022 Midterms are critical to saving democracy for multiple reasons including the judiciary. If Republicans take control of the Senate, they will revert back to when they were in control during the Obama years and refuse to confirm any Democratic nominees, no matter how qualified. At a minimum, they will intentionally slow the process to delay these nominees from assuming responsibility and try to preserve as many vacancies as possible until after 2024, hoping they can win the White House. The 2024 Election will be similarly critical. If Republicans, especially Trump, were to win back the White House, the plan to saturate the judiciary with less qualified jurists and jurists committed to Trump and the MAGA agenda, not the rule of law.

Republican rule, until and unless they jettison the MAGA menace, means an end to even more freedoms, weakening of democracy, campaigns of election stealing and voter suppression, and other outrageous harm to the nation. Elections have consequences. Many Republicans said they disagreed with Trump on certain issues, objected to the extremism, etc., but voted for him because they wanted Republican judicial appointments. In any case, Trump got to appoint record numbers of judges, many not properly vetted or qualified. The Senate must revert back to proper confirmation processes no matter who wins elections. We the people must ensure we only vote for presidential congressional candidates who responsible with the sacred duty of appointing judges. The danger is too great.

What We're Reading

<u>Poor People Will Be Voting for Their Lives in the Midterms</u>, Reverend William J. Barber and Tope Folarin, *Newsweek*: "With Congress failing to extend vital safety net programs created during the pandemic, poor and low-income people will be voting for their lives in this year's midterms."

<u>The data is in: Poverty is a political choice</u>, Karen Dolan, *The Hill*: Even more impressive, the child poverty rate fell by over half, driven primarily by the enhanced Child Tax Credit. The number of households with children experiencing hunger also fell in 2021. Results like these aren't miraculous — they're the result of common sense federal investments.

<u>Racial wealth gap may be a key to other inequities</u>, Liz Mineo, *The Harvard Gazette*: A 2018 analysis of U.S. incomes and wealth written by economists Moritz Kuhn, Moritz Schularick, and Ulrike I. Steins and published by the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis concluded, "The historical data also reveal that no progress has been made in reducing income and wealth inequalities between black and white households over the past 70 years."

Biden Heads for the Midterms with Ten Million New Jobs, John Cassady, The New Yorker: It should be noted that the September jobs report provided no evidence that the economy is suffering from a nineteen-seventies-style wage-price spiral, which is the inflation hawks' nightmare scenario. In September, average hourly earnings rose by ten cents. That's about 0.3 per cent, or 3.8 per cent on an annualized basis. And this wasn't a one-month aberration. Since the end of last year, the rate of wage growth has fallen slightly. The corporate profit rate, on the other hand, has recently reached its highest level in seventy years, as businesses of all kinds pass along higher prices to consumers, and then add in a little extra for themselves.

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 for 2022, please do so - it's almost time to renew for 2023. 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 **third Wednesday** (note change of day) of each month. We've been meeting via zoom since the onset of Covid and are <u>finally</u> resuming live meetings at Pompey Park.

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 Ron DeSantis with **Charlie Crist** and Marco Rubio with Chief **Val Demings**.

Democratic Club of Delray Beach

Preferred method of contact: E-mail Mail Phone Text

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

We are also supporting Aramis Ayala, Lori Berman and the rest of the Democratic candidates.

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:



2022 Membership Application and Renewal			
Date	New	Renewal	Democratic Club of Delray Beach
Name/names of hous	sehold membe	ers	
Address			
Community/Condo 1	Name		De Trans
E-mail Address		Phone number	#BLÚEWAVE
abreast of the latest	County Demo	the Palm Beach County Democratic cratic Activity. If you do not wish to e your E-mail address.).	

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.