

# The Delray Democrat

February 2025 (# 76)

## People Get Ready<sup>a</sup>

Michael K. Cantwell

“That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons that history has to teach.” Aldous Huxley, *Collected Essays*

Republicans now control both the presidency and Congress for the fifth time in the last 100 years.

Each such presidency produced a recession: The Great Depression; the 1953-1954 recession; the Great Recession of 2008; and the final year of Trump’s first administration. That was the first time since The Great Depression that a president left office with fewer Americans working than when he was inaugurated.

Count on Republicans to keep their streak alive in 25. That may come as a surprise to those who believed Donald Trump a better economic steward than Joe Biden or than Kamala Harris would have been. After all, as the media reminded us on virtually a daily basis for over 2 years, inflation under Biden was the highest it had been in four decades!

Critical facts were routinely absent from that coverage: Inflation was a worldwide phenomenon caused principally by the global economy reopening after COVID and was lower in the United States than other industrialized countries. Biden tamed it quickly, in less than half the time it had taken four decades earlier – and without the recession and 10.8% unemployment that occurred under Reagan.

While voters blamed Biden for the COVID-created inflation, they have given Trump a pass for the millions of jobs lost on his watch.

They also failed to credit Biden for creating over 16 million jobs in less than 4 years (more than Reagan had created in 8 years). And they are clearly oblivious to the fact that Democrats created more than triple the number of jobs as Republicans over the last eight administrations (four Republican and four Democratic).

Trump is inheriting a far stronger economy than the train wreck he left for Biden. Harris would have built on Biden’s economy, but Trump is likely to leave another train wreck for his successor.

He’s promised to raise tariffs and deport millions of low-wage immigrants, inevitably and significantly increasing the cost of goods and spiking inflation.

His proposed tax cuts will be weighted to the wealthiest Americans, which is the least efficient way to stimulate the economy and the most effective way to increase inequality.

People get ready, there’s train wreck comin’.

## Pure Immigration Hypocrisy<sup>b</sup>

June S. Neal

President Trump’s and Gov. Ron DeSantis’ de facto dictator usurpation of the legislative process is bad enough. But could they be any more hypocritical?

I don’t know of anyone who boycotts the tomatoes these immigrants harvest for 10 hours a day in the hot sun or refuses to use the bathrooms they clean in hotels or who won’t eat in restaurants where they wash pots and pans. I never heard anyone reject the \$73 billion in federal, state and local taxes that all these immigrants paid in 2022.

Or the billions these immigrants have paid into Social Security, Medicare and unemployment insurance for programs they’re not even eligible to use. Focusing solely on their back-breaking, low-wage contributions to the economy is a betrayal to our cherished American ethic of welcoming newcomers.

Kids in America are sitting in classrooms and wondering if their parents will be there when they get home. That’s beneath any decent society.

<sup>a</sup> Published in slightly different form January 23, 2025 in *The Sun-Sentinel*.

<sup>b</sup> Published January 31, 2025 in *The Sun-Sentinel*.

# Inoculate Yourself Now Against Stockholm Syndrome

*June Sandra Neal*

I overheard three neighbors, all Democrats, react this way to Trump's recent flouting of the 14th Amendment and to his cruel treatment of immigrants: *maybe he is right*. After all, we can't have (thousands, millions, fill in whatever crazy number gets floated around) of illegals coming into the country. Or people giving birth here just to claim citizenship for their kids. Some "man on the street" TV interviews picked up similar sentiments. These people are showing signs of Stockholm Syndrome.

Stockholm Syndrome is a maladaptive psychological disorder. It's a way of coping with unbearable and seemingly insurmountable circumstances. It involves suppressing reality and viewing one's oppressors as friends or champions, or at least as their being on the "right" side.

You're more likely to be "infected" if you have no contact with people dealing with reality and facts. That's the musty, closed environment Trumpers have lived in since 2015. One of the most famous sufferers was Patty Hearst, the young heiress to the

of a majority of Republican governors, as well as the billionaire CEOs of some of our biggest corporations, including Meta, X and Space X; it seems there's no way to right the ship.

Although the architecture of a democracy remains, it's sclerotic; our government can't be responsive to the American people since it's been arrogated by those determined to kill it in favor of a dictatorship. Trump's election was particularly stunning because he had already demonstrated his sociopathy during his first term in office and in the preceding and subsequent years. But here we are. What to do?

First, history is our friend. The French revolutionaries faced a corrupt monarchy and won. Dictators in nations over the world have been toppled. We may not see a way out now, but, as Bob Dylan said, almost, the times are always changin'. America saw the end of slavery and the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Women won the right to vote. It was the unarmed college students facing up to police with guns and batons that ended the war in

*Once a movement aimed at ending injustice has started, it can grow exponentially. And when that happens, things begin to change.*

Hearst newspaper dynasty, kidnapped in 1974 by the Symbionese Liberation Army, who later became part of the group and participated in their armed bank robberies. She was caught and sentenced but later pardoned by President Bill Clinton, who believed she was coerced into participating in the robberies, although many analysts thought she suffered from Stockholm Syndrome.

People who voted for Kamala Harris and Tim Walz are vulnerable to infection. Now, living in a world of ineffable sadness and confusion, controlled by a stupid, immoral man and his gang of cowardly ass-kissers, they may feel hopeless. How to save democracy? Trump's fascists control all three branches of the federal government, and he successfully nominated 234 federal judges, including three for the US Supreme Court. He has the backing

Viet Nam. Richard Nixon was forced to resign when he discovered he didn't have Republican support on the Senate Watergate Committee. (Their fidelity to democracy made stars out of Democrat Sam Ervin and Republican Howard Baker, Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee.)

Next, now is the time to mobilize. There's much we can do. First, we must support the Democrats in Congress and in our state legislatures. Write and call them about the issues that concern you. They're only human and we need to let them know we're behind them in the frustrating job they face. Second, put pressure on the Republicans for every vote. They're aware of the calls and letters they receive. Right now, their fear of Trump overrides their doing what's right, but they all have egos, so we've got to remind them how history will record their actions.

## **Democratic Club of Delray Beach Officers and Directors**

Michael Cantwell, President; Char Lane, Vice-President; Mary Fader, Secretary; David Kulick, Treasurer; Robert Averack, Parliamentarian; Peter Camacho, June Neal, and Martie Wrock, Directors; and John Ramos, Director Emeritus.

(Just think of Josh “Legs” Hawley running from the mob on January 6 or Rudy Giuliani’s press conference in front of the Four Seasons Total Landscaping business.)

If you haven’t done so, join an advocacy group for immigration, gun control, abortion, the environment or the integrity of our voting system— or whatever you’re most passionate about. If there’s a subject not being addressed, call a few friends or neighbors and start your own group.

You have tools. They include boycotts and strikes, letters to the editors, and attendance at government hearings and school board meetings. Donate to groups like the American Civil Liberties Union. Even a small amount will make you feel you are part of something that’s doing important work.

If you’re depressed, you’re tired. If you can’t get enough energy to head out for a meeting, use a buddy system to encourage one another to attend. Think of yourself as a soldier reporting for duty.

Even one meeting a month can make a difference. Of course, you can participate via Zoom meetings, but there’s no energy tonic like in-person sessions with friends and neighbors.

Once a movement aimed at ending injustice has started, it can grow exponentially. And when that happens, things begin to change.

## **The White House Press Corps Looks Forward to Trump 2.0**

*Michael K. Cantwell*

And why not? Trump is good copy! Joe Biden wasn’t. As an unnamed print reporter explained to the [Columbia Journalism Review](#), under Biden there were “fewer eyeballs on the press briefings and less attention than under Trump.”

Moreover, Biden didn’t like meeting with the media, preferring “to offer background quotes from in-house experts whose job it was to speak to the press.” In contrast, added the unnamed print reporter, Trump thrives on the attention of the media, even as he excoriates them:

Despite his sometimes strident and sometimes even violent rhetoric about the press, he loves talking to us. And his team — they like talking to us, and they know that they’re going to have a huge audience.

Above all, don’t forget all the reasons you voted for the Harris-Walz ticket. The inhumanity of Trump’s mass deportation program. Or the negative effect on workers if our government interferes with the autonomy of unions. Or how many women could die or have their lives changed forever when denied reproductive health care.

And how can we ignore Vladimir Putin’s invasion of our voting process, the guy Trump called “a genius” for invading Ukraine? Will we allow the death of decades of successful public education by allowing a religious group to dictate the public-school curriculum?

Just a few months ago, the answers were “we can’t and we won’t.” But hopelessness and lassitude are taking hold, and some are in danger of Stockholm Syndrome.

Don’t give in. Think of what the colonists, the abolitionists, the women’s rights’ groups and others achieved. And although these groups had extraordinary leaders, they were made up of ordinary people who found the strength to stick their necks out, to become soldiers for justice and human rights. That’s the task before us now and the vaccine to fend off Stockholm Syndrome.

A veteran White House reporter (also unnamed) offered the following:

I actually think the team that’s coming in is not going to be as horrific as people might imagine. It’s not going to be like the first Trump term, where nobody had any idea what they were doing.

It’s unclear whether the “veteran” was naïve or cynical, but the fact that Trump 2.0 may know what it is doing should scare the hell out of him. Here’s the odious Steven Cheung bragging and threatening:

We’re a no-bullshit operation and we’re focused on the mission. The press who have worked with us in the last two years understand that, and so they are better prepared to work with us. Those who don’t understand that are just undercutting themselves..

# Handicapping a Perfect Hurricane

*Michael K. Cantwell*

In a rational and civil society in which citizens paid attention and had access to facts, Kamala Harris would have succeeded Hillary Clinton to become our second woman president. Instead, a man who is unfit to run a local dog pound was elected to our nation's highest office for a second time.

How did that happen? As in 2016, there are a multiplicity of reasons. That makes it tempting, if feckless and counterproductive, for Democrats to point fingers at other Democrats.

Massachusetts Congressman Seth Moulton got in one of the first shots, accusing the Democratic Party of failing "to listen to Americans and actually understand them at a cultural level." He was referring to a single aspect of Democrats' support for transgender rights, namely, allowing transgender athletes to compete on the basis of their preferred gender as opposed to their gender assigned at birth.

However, the most significant reasons Harris lost defy easy and quick fixes.

## Systemic Rather than Political Issues

Racism and sexism have been systemic in America since its founding.

Sexism played a significant part in Trump's victory in 2016, and Trump's gains among Black and Hispanic males suggests it was a greater motivator than racism in 2024..

Also systemic are the rise of disinformation and the degradation of the media. We are no longer in an environment in which three television networks deliver the nightly news as a public service that is devoid of deliberate lies and egregious distortions.

The corporate media has been circling the drain since an Australian media baron emigrated from England

*That shameful but frank admission by a member of the Fourth Estate accurately describes the media environment in which we exist.*

Regurgitating a Republican trope and throwing a marginalized community under the bus earned him widespread [media attention](#) and [approval](#). And he completely ignored the fact that – on most other issues involving transgender rights – [polls show](#) that a majority of Americans support policies that expand rights and protections for transgender people and oppose policies that restrict their rights and protections.

Moulton also ignored the fact that public opinion can shift quickly (witness rapid turnaround in support for gay rights). Just as Democrats were on the right side of history then, our support for transgender rights will be on the right history when Americans culturally evolve past bigotry, ignorance, and fear.

Others blame DEI, but a recent [Pew Research](#) poll found that twice as many American workers favored expanding (52%) as did eliminating (26%) DEI in the workplace. The problem is not the issue but the messaging. As is true of virtually every other issue, Republican messaging on DEI crushed Democratic messaging. That is something we have known about and have been trying to fix for years.

and showed the corporations that acquired previously independent broadcasters just how much money is to be made, turning the nightly news from a public service into a profit center.

Finally, there is the role of the Supreme Court, which ensured that Trump would not be tried for his role in the January 6 insurrection or his illegal possession and retention of classified documents for a full 1½ years after he left office. Would the public exposure to a daily drumbeat of damning evidence have made a difference? We'll never know.

## Mixed and Fixable Issues

**The Economy.** According to the polls, the economy was the principal concern of voters. It performed at historically high levels on all measures throughout Biden's tenure, with the glaring exception of one critical measure, namely, inflation.

A media more interested in reporting facts than chasing eyeballs and profits would have spent as much time reporting the good news (most jobs

created in the first years of an administration, lowest unemployment in over half a century, etc.) as the bad (highest inflation in four decades).

They might have even spent *more* time since there was far more good than bad news. They would have made clear that legislation signed by President Biden was responsible for the strength of the economy while Covid was principally responsible for the inflation.

They would have emphasized the fact that Biden's unequalled job creation was how inflation was essentially cured in half the time as it took back in the 1980s – and without a recession. See here for how that would have looked.

But it's fair to say that it's been a long time since the So-Called Liberal Media saw the unmasking of lies as their remit. NBC's Chuck Todd once infamously [claimed](#) that it wasn't the media's job to debunk the disinformation surrounding the Affordable Care Act: "What I always love is, people say, 'Well, it's you folks' fault in the media.' No, it's the president of the United States' fault for not selling it."

That shameful but frank admission by a member of the Fourth Estate accurately describes the media environment in which we exist. Had Trump created the economic engine that was Bidenomics, he would not have shut up about it. The media let him take credit for the largest post-War expansion instead of pointing out it was something he'd inherited from Obama. And after the economy collapsed they let him blame Covid when the actual cause was his colossal incompetence in responding to Covid.

### ***Immigration***

Trump exploited fears that immigrants were taking American jobs and represented a public safety threat. It didn't matter that few Americans were actually willing to take the jobs filled by immigrants or that undocumented immigrants committed far fewer crimes. than natural-born citizens.

What mattered was Trump's relentless repetition of the Big Lie, coupled with the fact that so many Americans needed someone to blame for the fact that they had been losing ground for decades as economic inequality reached levels not experienced since the Gilded Age. And immigrants have always been a convenient scapegoat, especially when they are of a different skin color.

Immigration was an emotionally laden issue, perhaps more than any other in the campaign, and Trump had the upper hand once he scuttled the bipartisan immigration deal that had been largely drafted by conservative Republicans.

Biden and the Democrats brought only facts to the table. Some argue that by failing to impose stricter restrictions on immigration earlier they had handed Trump a winning issue. Once again, however, Democrats conceded the messaging war. Had the positions been reversed Trump would have never stopped Democrats for scuttling a bipartisan solution.

### **Getting Beat and Neutralized on "Our" Issues**

Women dying because of lack of medical care, the planet choking on fossil fuels, a democracy and a Constitution destroyed. These dangers were clear and present, unlike the bogeymen peddled by Trump. They were written into the pages of Project 2025. They motivated voters in 2022, but in 2024, we failed to use them and Trump managed to defuse them.

Trump simply lied his way through it all, credulous fools believed his lies, and the So-Called Liberal Media only timidly corrected him.

When he claimed that Democrats supported abortion in the eighth and ninth months and were killing babies after they were born, [NPR](#) and [NBC](#) referred to these brazen lies as "false claims."

He claimed he knew nothing about Project 2025 even though members of his first administration were intimately involved in its creation and even though he had previously advanced one of the Project 2025's principal goals by reclassifying tens of thousands of federal civil servants, a first step to firing and then replacing them with apparatchiks. That Executive Order was rescinded by President Biden and [reinstated](#) by Trump on the first day of his second administration.

Democrats chose not to exploit the coming climate dystopia by copying LBJ's classic depiction of the nuclear holocaust that would result if Goldwater became president. Would it have mattered? According to polls, Americans viewed an existential threat as among the least important issues facing the country. "*This is how the world ends/Not with a bang but a whimper.*"

## Forget January, and Take Heart

*Michael K. Cantwell*

You may have noticed that there was no January 2025 issue of *The Delray Democrat*. We took a pause to recover from the election, deal with the attendant as well as some personal grief, and prepare for the next two years.

I am now taking heart from an excellent op-ed by the always informative Ezra Klein last weekend: [Don't Believe Him](#). Klein explains that the onslaught of actions mounted by Trump in the opening weeks was intended to leave the media and the public breathless. Announced in 2019 by Steve Bannon, it has certainly had that effect, but as Klein points out, it is actually counterproductive.

He summarizes a conversation “with someone who knows how the federal government works about as well as anyone alive. I asked him what would worry him most if he saw Trump doing.” He told Klein what would most worry him is if Trump “went slowly,” focusing on acts that would make him more popular and the opposition weaker while building toward the midterms.

Instead Trump has done the opposite, taking unpopular acts that have energized the opposition.

Klein quoted a post by a federal employee reacting to Trump’s buyout offer:

I’ll be honest, before that email went out, I was looking for any way to get out of this fresh hell. But now I am fired up to make these goons as frustrated as possible.

Another is the fact that Democrats just flipped a state senate seat in a district that Trump had just won easily. And since the column published, Trump has already delayed imposing the tariffs on Mexico and Canada that he’d announced to great flurry. He’s begun to walk back his proposal to occupy the Gaza Strip and forcibly relocate two million Palestinians.

Klein’s point is that Trump *is* weak and is proceeding in a way that will only make him weaker. Our task is to *we recognize that Trump does not have the power he claims to have*:

He is trying to overwhelm you. He is trying to keep you off-balance. He is trying to persuade you of something that isn’t true. Don’t believe him.

## How Trump Is Losing

Here’s how the Honorable John Coughenour, a federal judge appointed by Ronald Reagan, responded to a Trump flunky’s insistence that Trump’s executive order canceling birthright citizenship was constitutional: **Frankly, I have difficulty understanding how a member of the Bar could state unequivocally that this is a constitutional order. It just boggles my mind.**

Issuing a nation-wide injunction, Coughenour noted: **“I’ve been on the bench for over four decades, I can’t remember another case where the question presented is as clear as this one is. This is a blatantly unconstitutional order. There are other times in world history where we look back and people of goodwill can say where were the judges, where were the lawyers?”**

*Closing USAID.* Another federal judge, this one a Trump appointee, temporarily enjoined him from placing USAID employees on leave. Some evangelical leaders have characterized the attempted closure as “damaging and wasteful.” Moreover, and this is something of which Trump is probably unaware, USAID purchases \$2B in agricultural products from American farmers, who lose these sales.

*Freezing Spending.* Facing protests, Trump rescinded his executive order freezing all federal grants and loans.

*Tariffs.* He announced, delayed, and then imposed tariffs on Canada and Mexico. And the chaos and uncertainty he is introducing is already spooking Wall Street and will spike inflation.

*Access by Musk to Treasury Records.* Judge Paul Engelmayer enjoined access to these sensitive records and ordered the destruction of anything that had previously been accessed. Some He now faces impeachment, which will fail.

## Did You Know? *Michael K. Cantwell*

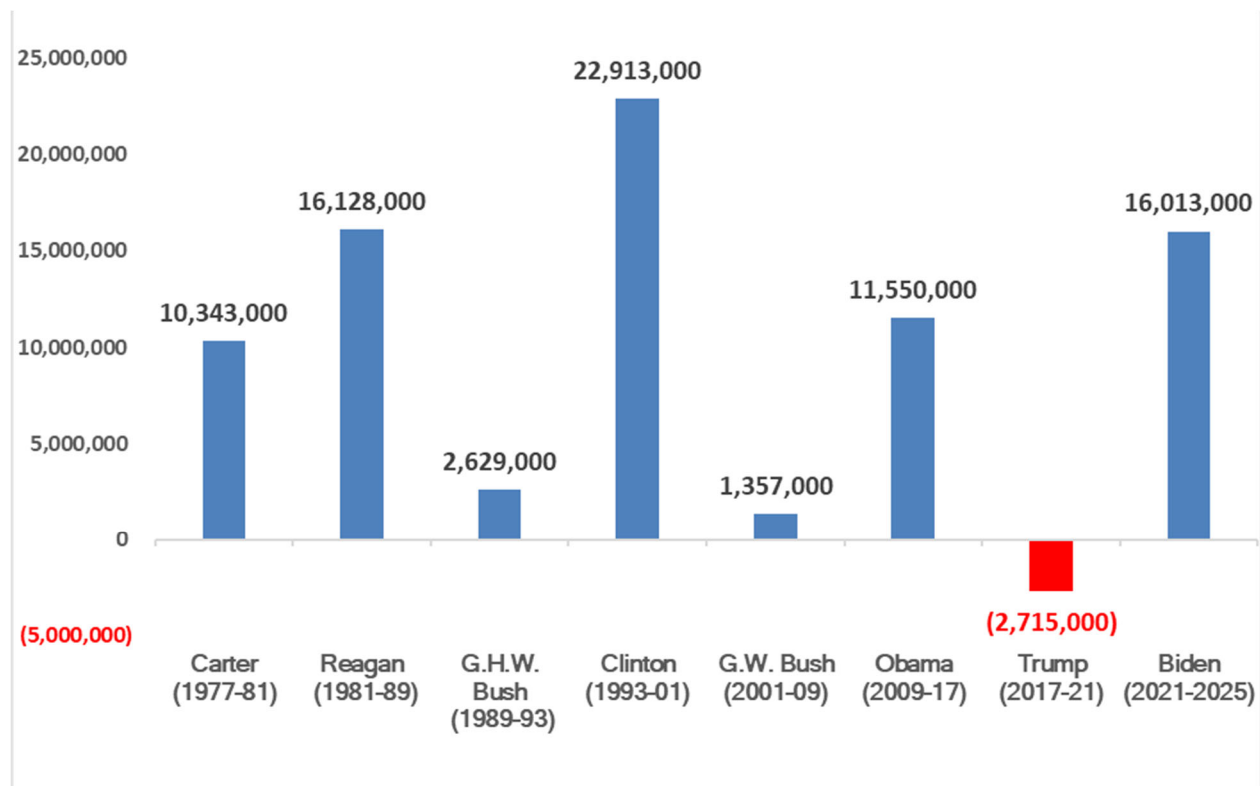
### Tax Cuts Geared to the Wealthy Have the Lowest Stimulant Effect of Any Job-Creation Measure?

For more than six years, the Congressional Budget Office tracked the eight different stimulant measures comprising President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Their conclusion: tax cuts to higher income individuals had the *lowest* stimulant effect. Four to five times *more* effective in stimulating the economy were the following measures: extending unemployment insurance and food stamps; transferring funds to state and local government for infrastructure and education; and purchases of goods and services by the federal government.

But we don't need an empirical study to conclude that money given to those who already have more than they need is far less likely to recirculate than money given to those without jobs or living from paycheck to paycheck.

### That President Biden created more jobs in a single term than any president in history and more than President Reagan created in two terms?



Data from Bureau of Labor Statistics. Total jobs calculated by subtracting January figures in inaugural year to January figures in departing year.

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## 2024 Membership

Char Lane

The most consequential General Election of our lifetimes is over and now is time to be resilient and work hard to help keep our democracy intact.

It's time to renew our DCDB 2025 memberships. Our 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 and held at the PBC DEC Office at 220 Congress Park Drive. Meeting notices are sent out in the weeks prior to meetings and include Zoom links to register for and/or join the hybrid 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. **Please remember to reenroll in the Vote-by-Mail Program for 2025-2026 online at [votepalmbeach.gov](http://votepalmbeach.gov) and selecting the Vote-by-Mail tab or calling 561.656.6208 or visiting any of the SoE offices.**

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. The 2026 Mid-term Elections are less than two years away and we have so much work to do.

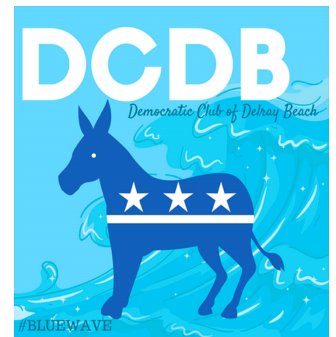
If you're a Club member, please renew your membership for 2025. If not, please consider joining. Visit us at [www.demclubofdelray.org](http://www.demclubofdelray.org). Read *The Delray Democrat* at [www.thedelraydemocrat.com](http://www.thedelraydemocrat.com). Join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/992741928168620>.

To join the DCDB: complete and mail the Membership application. You can also give me your membership application/renewal at our meetings.

**Important action item** - There are no municipal elections in Delray Beach this spring so we are going to offer help to Boynton Beach candidates who are Democrats. One young candidate, Dom Vargas, is running in the non-partisan race for Boynton Beach City Commission, District 3, against a Maga-Republican and we are organizing to make phone calls, write post cards and canvass. Please contact me if you'd can help.



### Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2025 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.