



South Brevard Democratic Women's Club

October 2013

President's
Message

Many of you are probably aware that Governor Rick Scott held an Education Accountability Summit meeting in Clearwater during the last week of August, but I doubt if any of you were invited to attend. He invited to this three day summit 40 individuals, including legislators, business professionals, principals, superintendents, parents, and teachers (only 3 teachers were reported by one source), for the purpose of suggesting changes to the current educational accountability system in four areas:



Patricia Farley Crutcher
President

the new Common Core state education standards;

the tests which will replace the FCAT, and access standards tied to the Common Core standards; the school grading system; and teacher evaluations, which state law requires are based in part on student test scores.

ERA Action

The group was led by interim state Education Commissioner Pam Stewart. The focus of the summit appeared to be the development of inoffensive common ground vision statements in the four focus areas that would support the governor's positions and current legislation. Opposition to Common Core and the new testing standards was evident and coming from both sides of the political spectrum. Claims were made that Common Core is an example of government overreach and that the national government would have too much control over state curriculum on one hand, while complaints that teachers would have to spend even more time teaching to a test and have no freedom to create their own programs were heard from the other side.

Politics 2013

On the topic of school grades and teacher evaluations, the Miami Herald did an analysis of schools and found that the wealthiest schools never received F's and the schools with highest percentages of poor students struggled to maintain a C.

Any classroom teacher knows that poverty is a factor, but when presented as something that should be considered as a factor, it disappeared.

Super Mule

FEA Vice President Joanne McCall was there and reported on Facebook....

"The first day they said we would be reaching consensus when they described our work and process but all during the summit everything was 'synthesized' and today...the final day...I discovered what that really means...sanitized. Once all the groups present their 'vision' the facilitators and commissioner put it together to make one...in the teacher evaluation we listed "poverty" as something that should be considered...however when we saw the final product it was called 'other characteristics' and when asked how that occurred the Commissioner said she took 'leadership liberty'...then at the end it said 'tied to pay for performance'...not one group had that in their vision statement and when I asked how that could be placed there when no group had it in their statement...I was told that if any group had it in the brainstorm...even though it didn't make it to the final product it could be added when...yes you got it... when they synthesized. I then questioned further and was told we were not reaching consensus...just

SBDWC
Boosters

synthesizing...so as I have said before we agree with some but not all.” She also said that the current system has left many teachers frustrated and they did not trust the system.

In a radio interview on WUSF one participant compared the summit to a meeting of two wolves and a lamb deciding what would be for dinner.

The summit fell short on coming to any hard agreements for implementing Common Core, but the task of the summit-taking on 20 years of Florida’s Education Policy in a 72 hour time frame and the idea of building any program of accountability for school grades and teacher evaluations in one day-- was certainly not realistic.

Rick Scott was criticized strongly in the press for not attending this summit that he called. Instead he held a private dinner meeting with former Governor Jeb Bush and State Senator John Thrasher, who are strong proponents of Common Core and charter schools. Thrasher was Speaker of the House when Bush was Governor and led the push for Bush’s Accountability plan. Also at the dinner meeting was State Board of Education Chairman Gary Chartrand who has recommended that instructional materials be “aligned with Florida’s value and culture” and reading lists for students be screened to avoid upsetting subjects such as socialism and homosexuality. Many sources are reporting that the summit was really a hastily planned attempt to show Scott as pro-education in his run for re-election. With his earlier term budget cuts to education, the padding of school grades this year and the resignation of State Education Commissioner Tony Bennett, Rick Scott received a major political blow in the field of education.

Make sure your family and friends know about this sham of a political attempt by Rick Scott to divert attention away from his educational failures and present him in a pro-education light to Florida voters.

As your President, I need to cover several disconnected, but important points in this newsletter.

At the November meeting we will hold our **club elections**. I will follow tradition for our club and run for a second term as your President. Milly Krause as Vice-President, Artney Turner as Treasurer and Hope Stewart as Secretary are also all eligible to run for second terms. The office of Second Vice President is vacant since Eileen Manning has not returned from California. If you would like to run for any office, please notify Past President Madeline Farley at 321-773-2949.

Our club by-laws require we not endorse any Democratic candidate that has individuals running against them before a primary election. At the time of this writing, September 15th, **Nan Rich is the only declared Democratic Candidate**. She has consistently supported the issues of the Democratic party and women. She has been a member of the DWC for many years and we will continue to run her letters.

It does seem that first Republican, then Independent, now Democrat Charlie Crist intends to run and it is expected to announce before the October Florida Democratic Convention. He spoke at the Democratic convention and campaigned for President Obama all around the state. A new fundraising period starts October 1st and most likely he will announce for that quarter. Crist has publicly stated he will make a decision in the fall. He will most likely immediately jump to the being the front runner with his popularity, and fundraising capabilities.

Are you concerned or skeptical of Crist. The Republican Party of Florida has been publicizing his comments for some time to show him to be “two faced” in their point of view. He has said he is a Jeb Bush and Ronald Reagan Republican. He’s praised Sarah Palin. He repeatedly said it would be hard to find anyone more conservative than he is. AND now he is a Democrat and it will be a “Gag me with a spoon moment” if we have to rally round him as our chosen candidate. The 2010 nominee and former state Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink has announced she will not run and U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson has said on several occasions he doesn’t intend to run for governor. Nelson is considered though by many to still be a possible candidates.

The fact remains that once someone else declares, the club must remain neutral. You can, of course, as always, work as individuals, for whatever candidate you prefer.

Many have asked me about the Democratic congressional candidates-- Gabriel Rothblatt and Corry Westbrook. In my opinion both are attractive candidates, but we have “two declared” candidates, and I am following policy to not endorse one over the other. Many have suggested we support Corry because she is a woman and is currently a member of the DWC of Indian River. We will not endorse a candidate if there is a primary election until after the primary..

Some have also strongly suggested that the DWC leadership should get involved in the complaint registered by an individual with the state against a current candidate. I want to make it clear that is the responsibility of the Florida Elections Commission to respond to a complaint, and not individuals or members of the DWC.

The Champagne and Chocolate event was a successful social and fundraising event. Everyone had a great time in a lovely venue. Thank you very much for participating and bringing items for the “Blue Donkey Sale.” State President Janet Goen and our Chair of Chairs Mary Freeman have told me many times they would like to come to this event, and so they did! What an honor it was to have them here. I think our SBDWC did a great job in showing them a Brevard Welcome!

Our next club meeting will be at Memaw’s on Saturday, Oct. 12th rather than Saturday, Oct 5th. I will call the meeting to order at 11:30 so we can end by 1:30 in time for our members who want to take part in the Cocoa Beach Rally against Monsanto to get there by 2 p.m. Please arrive early and place your order for breakfast or lunch before we start to save time. Also Please be aware that Memaw’s is graciously allowing us to use their meeting room without charge, IF we purchase 250\$ worth of food, which should not be difficult. They have let us get by with purchasing \$200 at times, too. Please support our having this venue for our meetings by actually eating at Memaw’s or buying take-out. The main purpose of this meeting will be to review the Convention Highlights with the group.

ERA Action Continues – Milly Krause

Florida State Action –

ERA is officially alive again for the 2014 Florida Legislative Session. Bills were filed in both the house and senate to work to make Florida the 36th state to ratify ERA. On September 12, 2013, Representative Lori Berman (D-Lantana) filed HCR 8001, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Senator Arthenia Joyner has filed the companion bill in the Florida Senate, SCR 68.



Milly Krause
Vice President

U.S. Congressional Action –

Have you made your calls yet to Senators Rubio and Nelson to request them to co-sponsor SJR157? If not, your support is needed. Call as follows:

Senator Nelson – 202-224-5274.

Senator Rubio - 202-224-3041.

The House Bill is HJR56.

Since I wasn’t able to publish last month, the Q & A I started in August will now continue. The Q & A is from the National Council of Women’s Organizations – ERA Task Force. Questions 1 to 3 were addressed in August. Questions 4 & 5 Follows with the remaining frequently asked questions to be answered over the next few months.

4. Which 15 states have not ratified the ERA?

The 15 states whose legislatures have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia.

5. Why are these 15 states being asked to ratify the ERA based on a “three-state strategy,” even though the 1982 deadline has passed?

Since 1995, ERA supporters have advocated for passage of ERA ratification bills in a number of the 15 so-called “un-ratified” states. Such bills have been introduced in one or more legislative sessions in eight of these states (Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Virginia). While no state has passed an ERA bill in both houses of its legislature since 1977, ERA bills have advanced legislatively in some of those states. The Illinois House, but not the Senate, passed an ERA ratification bill in 2003. In February 2011 and February 2012, the Virginia Senate passed a resolution ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment, but the House of Delegates did not vote on the companion bill. This political activity is the result of a three-state strategy for ERA ratification, which was developed following addition of the 27th Amendment (“Madison Amendment”) to the Constitution in 1992, more than 203 years after its passage by Congress in 1789. Acceptance of that ratification period as sufficiently contemporaneous has led some ERA supporters to argue that Congress has the power to maintain the legal viability of the ERA’s existing 35 state ratifications. The time limit on ERA ratification is open to change, as Congress demonstrated in extending the original deadline, and precedent with the 14th and 15th Amendments shows that rescissions (legislative votes retracting ratifications) are not accepted as valid. Therefore, Congress may be able to accept state ratifications that occur after 1982 and keep the existing 35 ratifications alive. The legal analysis for this strategy is explained in “The Equal Rights Amendment: Why the ERA Remains Legally Viable and Properly Before the States” by Allison Held et al. in William & Mary Journal of Women and the Law, Spring 1997. The Library of Congress’s Congressional Research Service analyzed this article and concluded that acceptance of the Madison Amendment does have implications for the three-state strategy, and that the issue is more of a political question than a constitutional one. From 1994 to 2008, Representative Robert Andrews (D-NJ) was the lead sponsor of a resolution stating that when an additional three states ratify the ERA, the House of Representatives shall take any necessary action to verify that ratification has been achieved. In 2011, he joined lead sponsor Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) in support of H.J. Res. 47, which would remove the ERA’s ratification deadline and make it part of the Constitution when three more states ratify. S.J. Res. 39, the Senate companion bill to that legislation, was introduced by Sen. Benjamin Cardin (D-MD). Most ERA advocates believe that both the traditional amendment process and the three-state strategy should be supported in the effort to put the ERA into the Constitution.

You might be a Republican if...

You’ll spend \$20 billion guarding a bridge against the possibility of a terrorist attack, but won’t spend 20 cents to keep it from falling down on its own.

Recently, the Chairman of the Florida Republican Party began attacking me about my voting record on taxes. Let me be very clear – I believe we should all pay our fair share to underwrite the many services needed and expected from government. But I also believe that middle-class Floridians and small businesses shoulder a larger burden of taxes and fees than they should. They do so because Rick Scott and the Republican-led legislature have let big corporations get away with paying next to nothing or nothing at all. That’s one of the reasons why I voted against the massive tax and fee increases pushed through by the Republicans in 2009.

The very next year after that tax increase, Rick Scott gutted public education funding by cutting more than a billion dollars from an already underfunded budget. While some of that money was restored last year, the funding for our schools today is only at 2007 levels -- still about \$500 million short of where it should be at a minimum.

That’s right -- \$500 million – the same amount Rick Scott is touting on his re-election tax-cut tour around the state. Instead of using those funds to restore the cuts to education and begin to pay for other critical needs that were slashed from the budget during the recession, Rick Scott is playing politics.

That’s not leadership.

The effects of our nation’s economic recovery are finally beginning to be felt here in Florida and we should take advantage it. We need leadership that will get Florida back on the right track – and with your help, I will do just that! Click here to support Nan’s campaign to defeat Rick Scott.



CAMPAIGN NEWS

Improving our public schools and creating a skilled and educated work force are key to our state’s economic health. As governor, I will invest in education and work to make Florida’s schools among the best in the nation.

We can do better. We must do better.

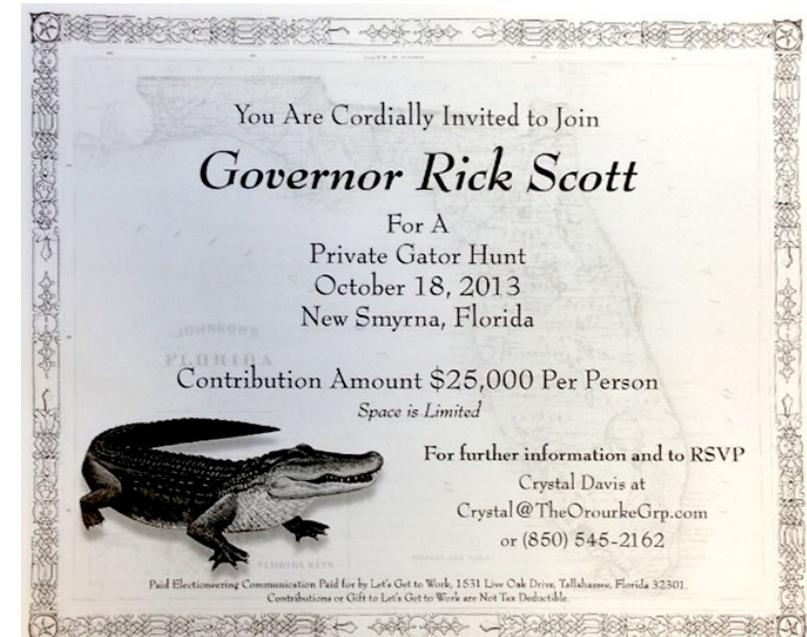
Nan Rich

Yes this is real:

Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi was a staunch supporter of Gov. Rick Scott’s Timely Justice Act, a controversial law that speeds up executions in the state by restricting “frivolous” appeals by inmates.

Yet one such execution was just postponed for another month so that Bondi can attend a Tampa fundraiser for her re-election campaign

Rick Scott will let you kill an alligator with him for a \$25,000 campaign donation





Super Mule

“The peacemaker is Vladimir Putin. He is going to help us secure the chemical weapons, because if there is one thing you can trust Putin with, it’s poison.” –Bill Maher

“The way it’s going to work is Assad is going to turn over his chemical weapons to Russia, who will then of course sell them to China, who will repackage them as off-brand roach spray, and you can get them at the 99 cent store.” –Bill Maher

“It’s not that easy to go and secure all these chemical weapons. For one thing, the Syrians have been scattering stockpiles of the chemical weapons all over. They’ve even got some stored here in the U.S. It’s called Monsanto.” –Bill Maher

“Putin wrote that Op Ed in The New York Times yesterday and lectured America on democracy. This is like getting parenting notes from Billy Ray Cyrus.” –Bill Maher

A Senate panel working on laws to protect the media has agreed on an official definition of a journalist. The new official definition of a journalist is a blogger wearing pants.” –Conan O’Brien

“Russian President Vladimir Putin actually wrote an Op-Ed piece in The New York Times where he said it’s dangerous for Americans to see themselves as ‘exceptional.’ Then he said, ‘Except for that Justin Timberlake. That guy is amazing.’” –Jimmy Fallon

“Putin said it’s dangerous for Americans to see themselves as ‘exceptional’ and said that, quote, ‘God created us equal.’ Then he got back to arresting people for being gay.” –Jimmy Fallon

“Dennis Rodman has been hanging out again in North Korea. He just announced that he will train the North Korean basketball team for the Olympics. He’s going to teach them the key strategy that always worked for him – pass the ball to Michael Jordan.” –Jimmy Fallon

“It’s quite a week for me because Eliot Spitzer lost his race for comptroller and Anthony Weiner lost his race for mayor. So that means I am back to being New York City’s biggest embarrassment.” –David Letterman

“If Obama really wanted to sell us on Syria, he should have taken a page from the people selling us Siri. Pushing an iPhone and a war are a lot alike. You just say that the new one is smaller, cheaper and faster and people will buy it. Even though they’ve already got one and they’re still paying off the previous model.” –Stephen Colbert

“Crisis averted. Now Congress suspends its vote on a military strike, the U.N. secures Assad’s chemical stockpile, and the Syrian people can go back to being killed with conventional methods. Everybody wins.” –Stephen Colbert

The newer voting machines weren’t properly programmed – or as Florida put it, ‘Never stopped us.’” –Jimmy Fallon

“You can tell that fall is coming. The leaves are changing faster than the White House position on Syria.” –Jay Leno

Special Guests At the Champagne and Chocolate with (left to Right) President Patty and Past-President Madeline included State Past President Janie Holman, Chair of Chairs Mary Freeman and State President Janet Goen.



Take Back the Night

NOW’s **Kick off for Take Back the Night** will be Tuesday, September 24 at 5:30pm at Lexi Martinis & Tapas in Melbourne, Florida

The Big Event will be held on Friday, October 11, 2013 from 6:30-9:30 pm at the Florida Institute of Technology at FIT’s outdoor amphitheater --the Panthereum. There will be music, information, and vendors, all with the goal of raising awareness, and funds, for organizations that help victims of domestic violence in our community.

HANDS ACROSS THE LAGOON!

9-10am Saturday, September 28, 2013

At eight locations along the Indian River Lagoon, from Volusia County in the north to Martin County in the south, join friends and neighbours to help call attention to the serious decline of the lagoon -- and ultimately move government officials to take action to heal and restore the health of the lagoon. In Melbourne the event will cross the Melbourne Causeway (US Hwy 192)

DWC Convention and Next Meeting

We are ready, excited and on our way to represent the South Brevard Democratic Women’s Club at our State Convention!

Your SBDWC is sending 11 delegates to our DWC state convention in Panama City Beach and will be bringing the election results, state resolutions and changes in by-laws back to you at our **next meeting on October 12th at Memaw’s** in Indian Harbour Beach. Please be on time, order early and we will start promptly at 11:30.

We have a lot of members who want to take part in the **Monsanto Demonstration in Cocoa Beach** that day which states at 2:00p.m. Peaceful march is planned at the corner of A1A and 520. Any who wish to bring children should feel encouraged to do so. Our mission is to educate Cocoa Beach on the vast and dire threat that Monsanto poses to our health and Democracy.

Scheduled Events



Next

SBDWC Meeting

at Memaw’s

Saturday, Oct. 12th

I will call the meeting to order at 11:30 so we can end by 1:30





SBDWC Boosters

Janie Holman
 Geraldine Kapushy
 Cathy Stanton
 Madeline Farley
 Alan Jotkoff
 Pat Jotkoff
 Laura Fausone
 Joe Pishgar
 Eileen Manning
 Bea Gillespie
 Maggie Gula
 Leonia Francis
 Artney Turner
 Jackolyn Lombardo
 Vicki Impoco
 Molly Tasker
 www.hodadpix.com
 Bessie Barnes
 Terry Sanders
 Seeta Begui
 Milly Krause
 Dan Sorkowitz
 Jen Sorkowitz

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 is
Organized Labor

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Contact pfarley_101@hotmail.com



Our sincere Thoughts and Prayers are extended to all the US troops stationed in Afghanistan, around the world and also to their families everywhere.

We pray for the safe return of the troops, a speedy end to the war and the wisdom of our leaders to guide us in this conflict.



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 these our newsletters at
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