From the President’s Desk

OK! What do we do now? On January 20th, Donald Trump will become President of the United States. There is no point in complaining or in walking away. It is a done deal. But we need to make our beliefs heard in the White House, in Congress and in the State Legislatures. We need to focus on domestic issues and to keep calling and writing to our Senators and Representatives, telling them:

“No, we don’t want school vouchers. We want respect for our public schools and for the teachers so that our children learn to do more than take a test.”

“No, we don’t want more access to guns. Instead we want sensible restrictions on the use of guns, including banning expanded cartridges, semi-automatic weapons, stand your ground, and open-carry. We need to be certain all guns are registered and to encourage safety locks.”

“Yes, we want you to fund Planned Parenthood so that poor women can get the healthcare they need. Most important, we want you to keep the Affordable Health Care Plan, fix the problems with it, reinstate the mandates, and move us to a single payor plan.”

“We want you to understand that Corporations are not people, but if you insist on saying they are, then the CEOs of Corporations who break the law must go to jail. We need to keep Dodd-Frank and we need regulations on Corporations to save our air, lands and water.”

“We must recognize that Climate Change is a real and devastating danger to our planet and to act accordingly.”

“We demand that you fix the legal system so that a person who is not white does not have 2 ½ strikes against him or her at the start. We also demand that those who pay their debt to society have their right to vote reinstated.”

“We want you to stop privatizing prisons and changing laws so that more and more poor people of color are sentenced.”
to prison. In fact, we want this privatizing stuff to stop. You have taken the right to corporate profits to a ridiculous high.”

“We want you to stop giving tax cuts to the wealthy. Enough is enough. The very wealthy should not be enriched by burdening the middle class.”

“Stop messing with Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Pay back to Social Security the funds that past Congresses have “borrowed. States need to incorporate the initial AHCA rules expanding Medicaid.”

“Fix our immigration system and in doing so remember that people are not “illegal. You may think their status is illegal, but you need to stop calling the human beings themselves, illegal.”

“Raise the Federal and State Minimum Wage and require that by law any woman who is employed is paid equally with the men who do the same job.”

Let us remember that historically, a President has 18 months in his/her four year term to get his/her programs through Congress because, after that, everyone is gearing up for the mid-term elections. In that same theme, we need to be certain that we field good candidates and that we fund them. (Do you hear me Florida Democratic Party?)

I am sure I have left out some important issues. Let me know what you think is important. We will have an Issues Chair on our next Board and we will be addressing the above issues and others. Also, I realize that I have not mentioned the very frightening international challenges facing us because Donald Trump is a real and present danger to this country and to the world.

I hope to see you on January 16th at the Acropol Restaurant. Professor Allen will return to talk to us about the Constitutional challenges in a Trump Presidency.

Dr. Michael Allen will be our Speaker at our January Meeting.

Please join us on Monday, Jan 16 as our featured speaker, Stetson Law Professor Dr. Michael Allen will talk about the impact of the November election, from a Constitutional viewpoint.

Dr. Allen spoke at our June meeting, and I expect his message will be very different now from what it was in June.

Michael Allen is a Professor of Law at Stetson University College of Law in Gulfport, Florida. He also is the Director of Stetson’s Veterans Law Institute and the College of Law’s Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. He teaches courses in Civil Procedure, Remedies, Complex Litigation, Constitutional Law, Veterans Benefits Law, Practice, and Policy, and the Federal Courts and the Federal System. During his time at Stetson, Dean Allen has received the University level award for Excellence in Teaching, the Award for Excellence in Professionalism and Career Development presented by the Stetson College of Law Student Bar Association, been twice named the Best All Around Professor, and five times been awarded the Golden Apple Achievement Award for teaching.
A New Year's Prayer

May God make your year a happy one!
Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain,
But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes;
Not by making your path easy,
But by making you sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from you,
But by taking fear from your heart;
Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping your face bright,
even in the shadows;
Not by making your life always pleasant,
But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,
and by making you anxious to be there to help.
God’s love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.

~Anonymous

www.heartprintsofgod.com

“IF WE LOSE, WE LEARN FROM OUR MISTAKES, WE DO SOME REFLECTION, WE LICK OUR WOUNDS, WE BRUSH OURSELVES OFF, WE GET BACK IN THE ARENA, WE GO AT IT. WE TRY EVEN HARDER THE NEXT TIME.”

“We must scrupulously guard the civil rights and civil liberties of all our citizens, whatever their background. We must remember that any oppression, any injustice, any hatred, is a wedge designed to attack our civilization.”

Franklin Delano Roosevelt
January 9, 1940
The 2016 Election: Realignment, Deviation, or What?

By Dr. Rich Piper

Rich Piper, our club founder and past president, was our speaker in November. Speaking as a political scientist in order to better understand the 2016 election, he explained the four categories of election types in order to put 2016 into historical perspective. And as a political activist, he shared ideas for action and what we can do next.

For analytical purposes, the following name the types of elections with examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maintaining</td>
<td>Obama’s re-election in 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deviating</td>
<td>Carter election in 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reinstating</td>
<td>The 1960 election of Kennedy that restored the Roosevelt Democratic coalition after 2 deviating elections for Eisenhower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>realigning</td>
<td>These occur infrequently and have a major long-term impact-the 1932 election of Franklin Roosevelt that created a new progressive coalition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Dr. Piper hopes that the 2016 election is only a deviating election (or regrettably, a realigning election ushering in an era of pseudo-populist-nationalist conservatism). He listed his reasons for thinking it will be a deviating election: -Trump failed to win a popular plurality
- the Trump/Republican alliance of relatively poor, non-college educated whites, and wealthy country club whites is inherently unstable
If adapted, Trump’s policies of mass deportations, trade restrictions and massive tax cuts for the wealthy will likely destabilize the economy, leading to a negative impact on most non-college educated whites.

Dr. Piper hesitantly offered a third possibility based on the narcissistic and viciously vengeful personality of Donald Trump. By repeatedly violating the norms that have long governed our country, Trump’s election may be an election like Argentina’s in 1946 that led to the Juan Peron dictatorship or even Germany’s in 1933 that put Adolph Hitler in power. So there is the horrible possibly that the 2016 election will be like no other in U.S. history and will usher in long-term authoritarian rule, he said.

In response, Dr. Piper said, we must be vigilant. We must take strong actions to prevent the Trump administration from authoritarian rule and ending American democracy.

1. Stay active in this Club and the Democratic Party. Participate fully to orient them to progressive policies that will counter the Trump/Republican alliance and promote the general public interest.

2. Volunteer for organizations that promote social justice.

3. Donate money to organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

4. Be prepared to engage in more active opposition, including civil disobedience on a massive scale, if Trump and his allies begin to turn dangerously to authoritarian rule.

(Recapped by Ginny Nelson. Email ginny.nelson72@gmail.com if you would like a full copy of Dr. Piper’s speech.)
Tracking the Issues

The Florida Legislature is already holding committee meetings and filing bills to be considered during their upcoming session. In Washington, Congress and the new administration have an ambitious (and disturbing) agenda for the first 100 days. Peggy Tucker is putting together a small group to track the progress on key issues in areas such as healthcare, the environment, education, etc. and keep club members up to date on their status. If you are interested in helping with this initiative, please contact Peggy at peggytucker55@hotmail.com or 727-460-5345. Thank you!

TO ANNOUNCE THAT THERE MUST BE NO CRITICISM OF THE PRESIDENT, OR THAT WE ARE TO STAND BY THE PRESIDENT, RIGHT OR WRONG, IS NOT ONLY UNPatriotic AND SERVILE, BUT IS Morally TREASONABLE TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT
**UPCOMING SPEAKERS! 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Speaker/Topic</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| January | **Dr. Michael Allen**  
Dr. Allen Professor of Law at Stetson University College of Law in Gulfport, Florida. He will give us an update on the outlook for the Supreme Court under the new Administration. |
| February| **Dr. Charles McKenzie**  
Black History Month |
| March   | **Darden Rice and Rae Claire**  
Darden is a Council Member in St. Petersburg, and Rae Claire has been leading the Repeal Citizens United movement. They will discuss the St. Petersburg ordinance banning foreign money in municipal races. |
| April   | **Pam Keith**  
Pam was a candidate for U S Senator from Florida in the August primary. Despite not having won that race, Pam is not giving up on her role as activist. We SHALL see her running for office again in the not too distant future. Let’s encourage her. |

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**PLEASE NOTE:**

In January, 2017 the Nominating Committee will present a slate of recommended Officer/Board Candidates, the Election will be held in March. Nominations for all offices may be made from the floor.

The positions to be elected are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Parliamentarian
- Board of Directors (5)
Environmental News

**This bumble bee was everywhere. Now it’s on the endangered species list.**

For the first time in American history, a bumble bee species has been placed on the endangered species list. It probably won’t be the last.

The rusty patched bumble bee was so prevalent 20 years ago that pedestrians in Midwest cities fought to shoo them away. Now, even trained scientists and experienced bee watchers find it difficult to lay eyes on them.

Although rusty patched bumble bees are the first to be considered endangered, and the first bee species on the U.S. mainland to get the designations (the yellow faced bee in Hawaii became the first overall in October last year), they are likely to be joined by others. “This bee is kind of like the canary in the coal mine,” an indicator that many pollinator species — bees and butterflies — are in deep trouble. Honeybees are agriculture’s go-to pollinator for many of the foods Americans eat, but bumble bees are no slouches. As a group, they “are some of the most significant pollinators,” Fish and Wildlife says in a fact sheet on its Web site. “Although bumble bees show a preference for certain native flowers, they are generally not picky about where they get their nectar and pollen — almost any source flower will do.

“Bumble bees can fly in cooler temperatures and lower light levels than many other bees, which makes them excellent crop pollinators. They also perform a behavior called ‘buzz pollination,’ in which the bee grabs the pollen producing structure of the flower in her jaws and vibrates her wing muscles, dislodging pollen from the flower,” Fish and Wildlife said. Tomatoes, peppers and cranberries are among the crops that benefit.

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**Politics in the Park**

**Save the Dates**

The Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Politics in the Park PICNIC will be on Saturday, April 22, Taylor Park, Shelter 4. We’ll have good food and lots of Politics for you to enjoy.

The Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club Holiday Pot Luck is tentatively planned for Saturday, December 9, at Randolph Farms Community Center.
Democratic Reader Book Review:

Reviewed by Ginny Nelson

Ratf**ked: The True Story Behind the Secret Plan to Steal America’s Democracy

by David Daley (and recommended reading by Rob Lorei)

Ratf**ked exposes a secret Republican political dirty trick called “Redmap”. Redmap was created in response to the 2008 election of President Barack Obama. Karl Rove and other Republican operatives designed Redmap as a “coordinated assault on representative democracy through gerrymandering”.

By first flipping state legislatures before the census in 2010, Redmap then called for high-tech mapmaking, capable operatives, secrecy, and dark money to gerrymander districts in swing states. By 2012 the Republicans “had redrawn the congressional map so effectively that their house majority is guaranteed through 2020, regardless of the public will.”

In this book you can read about what went on, out of public view, concerning Florida’s attempt to control gerrymandering. In November 2010, Florida voters approved two constitutional amendments known as Fair Districts. In chapter 8’s startling expose, read about the political dirty tricks Republicans used to undermine our state constitution and the Florida voter’s demand for democratic elections without gerrymandering.

I, too, recommend reading this book. Understanding better some of what has been happening to us in recent years, I am more resolved to take action. I am more than ready to fight every day in whatever way possible: like writing this review and calling my legislators. Please join me. Ginny Nelson

Note: If you have read a good “politically”-oriented book that you would like to review, please submit a 250 work (or less) review to Lois Fries at loisfries@gmail.com by the end of day of the second Monday of the month.
**Health Issues:**

**OBAMACARE REPEAL NOT SO SIMPLE**

Republicans increasingly queasy about Obamacare repeal. Politico:

“There’s definitely fear on the Hill. Congress has only been in for a few days, but the conversation on Obamacare has definitely shifted. It’s no longer a ‘let’s-burn-the-joint-down’ type affair. Republicans are now realizing how hard it will be to replace the law, and many of them have plainly settled on the fact that they will never be able to craft a plan to insure as many people as Obamacare does. Several high-ranking members of Congress in both chambers told us they are extremely aware that this is a political minefield, and they’re not quite sure how they’re going to navigate it.”

Drew Altman, of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, explains what Trump voters want from health care, in NYT oped:

“The Kaiser Foundation organized six focus groups in the Rust Belt areas ... asked about policies found in several Republican plans ... several of these Trump voters recoiled, calling such proposals ‘not insurance at all.’ ... They were also worried about what they called ‘chaos’ if there was a gap between repealing and replacing Obamacare. But most did not think that, as one participant put it, ‘a smart businessman like Trump would let that happen.’”

Sen. Rand Paul opposes budget bill that would begin Obamacare repeal process. WSJ:

“I’m a no,” he said in a brief interview. “It adds $9.7 trillion in debt over 10 years.”

**Foreign Affairs:**

**FL SENATOR MARCO RUBIO JUST ASKED TILLERSON IF PUTIN IS A WAR CRIMINAL**

. His Response Is Disturbing, from Occupy Democrats, Senate Hearing

Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) has become an unlikely ally in the fight to stop incoming president Donald Trump’s corrupt nominee for Secretary of State from being confirmed. Rex Tillerson is the chairman and chief executive of oil giant ExxonMobil and has personally struck deals with Russian despot Vladimir Putin, fought anti-Russia sanctions, and worked with Russia to drill in the Arctic Circle despite fears of a devastating environmental effect. As the (potential) future Secretary of State, Tillerson refuses to denounce the numerous war crimes that have been committed under President Putin’s command.

Rubio called out Tillerson on his appalling stance that denigrates the system of international law that the United States helped build. Rubio asked Tillerson whether he would call Putin a “war criminal.”

Tillerson replied, “I would not use that term.” Rubio was visibly furious when he decried Tillerson’s refusal to face the facts: “It should not be hard to say Vladimir Putin’s army has committed war crimes in Aleppo.” Tillerson, who apparently is either unwilling to face facts that make his Russian buddies look bad or completely ignorant about the state of the world, said, “I look forward to being fully informed [when in office].”
Citizens for Responsible Gun Laws/Moms Demand Action

by Rod & Elizabeth Snedeker

Report of Citizens for Responsible Gun Laws/Moms Demand Action—Pinellas County

On December 9th, 2016 about twenty-five people weathered the cold temperatures to gather at the 25th Ave. Beach Access in Indian Rocks Beach for a Candlelight Vigil remembering the children and educators who died at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. And the thousands who have died since from gun violence. Vice-Mayor Wanda Schwerer of Belleair Beach spoke passionately about the necessity in Florida to free up local municipalities from state control so that they might pass responsible ordinances on the use of guns and shape the sort of communities in which their residents may live healthy and safe. Tom Kurt, organist for St. Jerome's Catholic Church with members of his choir provided inspirit music. Participants had lighted stars to hold aloft during the candle-lighting ceremony.

Some of those present said it was the most moving vigil of the five we have now held.

WE HAVE WORK TO DO

An email from the Progressive Democratic Caucus and forwarded to the State Chapter Leads of Moms Demand Action reminds us that we have work to do at the state level again this legislative session.

Already a bill, HB6001 has been submitted by Rep. Jake Raburn to allow “open carry” of guns in air ports; another bill, HB6005, submitted by Rep. Scott Plakon would permit “open carry” on college campuses. A third bill SB28, submitted by Sen. Rob Bradley would shift burden of proof to make it easier to claim Stand your Ground.”

You can get names, phone numbers, email addresses for the legislators on myflorida.com and click on government/legislative branch. You can also track legislation which will let you know what committee a bill is in and how it is progressing.

Call your legislators and let them know your opposition. The NRA hasn’t given up; neither have we. And justice and safety are on our side. We can make a difference.
How to remove Trump from office

By Richard Cohen

January 9 Washington Post

Donald Trump is a one-man basket of deplorables. He is a braggart and a liar. He is a bully and a demagogue. He is an ignomnius and a deadbeat, a chiseler and either a sincere racist or an insincere one, and his love for himself is matched only by my loathing of him. He is about to be president of the United States. A constitutional coup may be in the offing.

Since winning the election, Trump has not moderated his behavior. He still behaves like a brat — his childish tweeting Arnold Schwarzenegger for failing to get Trumpian ratings on “The New Celebrity Apprentice” being the most amusing example. Many of the others were just plain lies, the most serious being his earlier troubling statements regarding Russian efforts to affect the election. As always, Trump made this about himself — not, as it should be, about a foreign power meddling in our democracy.

Under the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, the vice president, together with a “majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide” can remove the president for being “unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office.” No doubt the mere mention of incapacitation would summon a horde of lawyers to Washington to contest it or the meaning of every term.

Is this going to happen? Probably not. We’ll just muddle through a Trump presidency, as we have some others. But the nature and malevolence of Donald Trump have to be borne in mind. He has shown little regard for the Constitution, as exemplified by statements saying that by definition anything a president does is legal, and he is prone to vulgar statements and tactics. Recall as Meryl Streep did at the Golden Globes, that Trump mocked Serge Kovaleski, a physically disabled New York Times reporter, and then denied that he had done anything of the sort. Here was the bully in full repugnance. Here was the liar in full contempt for the truth.

What Trump is really saying in his tweets: I’m weak

By Eugene Robinson

January 9 Washington Post

What kind of crybaby have Americans elected as their leader?

“One of the most over-rated actresses in Hollywood,” Trump absurdly called Meryl Streep, the most acclaimed actress of our time, demonstrating that he is no more prepared to become critic in chief than commander in chief.

Are there more important things to think and write about than Trump’s latest Twitter tantrum? Yes and no. Trump threatens to snatch (1) health insurance coverage from millions, (2) enact huge tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, (3) reverse progress against climate change, (4) destabilize the Western alliance, (5) pick fights with China while (6) cuddling up to Russia — the big-issues list is long and frightening. But I believe it would be foolish not to examine the personality and the psychological makeup of the man who will soon be in the White House.

(Ed Note: 1 - 6 above are some of the issues we will address this year in the Newsletter and the LMPDC.)

I don’t believe Trump’s tweets are part of some sophisticated strategy to draw attention from other events and topics. To me, this looks like simple action and reaction. When someone criticizes him publicly in a way that threatens his stature, he seems compelled to hit back. He can’t seem to ignore any slight. That’s a sign of weakness, not strength — as Putin and other world leaders surely have figured out.
Fake news is propaganda.
The powerful demanding apologies from artists is censorship.
Business dealings while in office are corruption.
Threatening protesters and petitioners is authoritarianism.
Declaring a minority an internal enemy and calling for militarized unity is fascism.
Everything starts with naming these things in public.
Resistance starts with plain speaking.

(From @AlexSteffan on Twitter)
The Forty Seveners

**HOW TO MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE**

Many of you expressed interest in making regular contributions to the LARGO/MID-PINELLAS PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL COMMITTEE. The Political Committee allows us to DONATE MORE TO CANDIDATES or issue advocacy than our club bylaws and state statute allow from our General Funds.

For example, many banks have repeating automated bill paying. That makes contributing automatic and easy each month. Contact us for the Account number for the electronic deposit.

Or you can send a check to:

*The Payee Name must be: Largo/Mid-Pinellas Progressive Political Committee. OR LMPPPC*

The mailing address is
Largo/Mid-Pinellas Progressive Political Committee. or
Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club
P.O. BOX 1242
LARGO, FL 33779

For the most up-to-date information on your Federal, State, and County representatives including all contact information, Go to:

What do we include in the Newsletter?

It’s clear that we Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club members are an interested, involved, informed - and opinionated - bunch. And providing a forum for all that “good stuff” is an important function of our newsletter. The Board encourages articles and letters to the editor.

This newsletter is created by volunteers who make every attempt to publish factual information, and who encourage the free exchange of information and opinions. It should include input from all of us. However, the opinions and viewpoints expressed by contributors may not necessarily reflect those of the club. Please send submissions to newsletter editor, Lois Fries, at loisfries@gmail.com.

Why Join the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club?

The club provides a variety of ways to stay informed and involved in local, county, state and national political discussions. But we’re not just about talk. We will be part of the action in finding the best candidates and getting them elected, as well as supporting the most important causes. We will write letters, make phone calls, knock on doors, register voters, and whatever else it takes to bring change to our communities, our county and our state. But, just as important, we also want to make time to enjoy each other’s company and celebrate each other’s efforts at social events throughout the year. Grassroots politics is effective and fun!

As a member of the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club you can:

- Meet other active Democrats
- Meet and get to know your elected officials and potential candidates
- Raise funds and work for candidates
- Participate in community service projects
- Hear speakers and discuss issues of local, state and national importance
- Attend special events and monthly meetings.
- For membership information, email admin@largodemocrats.com

Stating in membership year 2017 our dues will be $15.00 per year. This is the first increase in dues since our founding in 2009.