



From the President's Desk

By Rich Piper

Since the publication of our last newsletter, we've seen further developments that offer hope for the 2012 elections.

In the special election on May 24 in New York's 26th Congressional District, the Democratic candidate Kathy Hochul won a spectacular victory over her Republican opponent and a tea-party independent candidate in a heavily Republican area of upstate New York. This was a district in which the Republican candidate in 2010 had won 76% of the vote and which had voted overwhelmingly for John McCain and George W. Bush in presidential elections. The key issue of this campaign was the Republicans' embrace of the Ryan budget proposals, especially privatization of Medicare and major cuts in its funding, that I wrote about in last month's column. What I wrote last month proved prophetic in this election. Voters clearly do NOT like the Republicans' plans to wreck Medicare and Medicaid in order to give more tax cuts to the wealthy. We need to make sure that our voters hold our Florida Republicans accountable for their unanimous votes in the House and Senate for the Ryan plan.

There are, of course, other important issues; and we need to stress them, too. Here in Florida, Governor Scott and the Republican legislature have assaulted the environment, public education, public servants, voters' rights, women's rights, affordable health care and transportation needs. They have also revived the leadership slush funds that have been widely described as "legalized bribery." I have lived in Florida for 35 years, and this governor and legislature have compiled the most miserable record of any in my experience.

Floridians are responding very negatively to this record. The Quinnipiac Poll that came out at the end of May showed the Governor getting a positive assessment from only 29% of the respondents, while 57% expressed disapproval. The legislature received similar ratings from the public. We need to continue to write letters, make phone calls, support rallies and recruit candidates for 2012 in order to build further momentum against the Republicans. We also need to press Democratic officials and candidates to offer positive alternatives that address real problems.

Another recent encouraging indicator of political trends was the unexpected election of Alvin Brown as Jacksonville's first Democratic Mayor in 20 years and as its first African American mayor ever. The Florida Republican Party made an all-out effort to elect Brown's opponent, and Brown's victory (coming after Democrats swept the board in the Tampa mayoral and city council elections) suggests hope for the future of

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REMINDER

NEXT MEETING of the Largo-Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club.

Bring your donation of canned goods for the local food pantries.

DATE: June 20, 2011

TIME: 7:00 PM

PLACE:

Thirsty Marlin

351 West Bay Dr # 1, Largo,
(727) 586-3474 or email
Rich at

President@largodemocrats.com



Visit our website at:

www.largodemocrats.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Florida politics. Let's work to make that hope a reality!

Among the worst of the Republican legislators in Tallahassee has been Jeff Brandes in House District 52. Many of our club members and I joined with about 200 others to demonstrate in front of his office on May 10 to protest his abysmal voting record. A strong Democratic candidate, **Bill Nobles**, has now emerged to challenge Brandes in the 2012 elections. Bill, a young, dynamic St. Petersburg business executive, married, with three children, has earned degrees from St. Petersburg College and USF, as well as an M.S. Degree from Boston College. He spoke at the May meeting of the Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee and at the St. Petersburg Democratic picnic and made a very positive impression at both events. He is asking our assistance in gathering petitions to get him on the ballot. Let's do what we can to help him in this endeavor! I have petition copies and will bring them to our next meeting.

Our **June 20 meeting** (Thirsty Marlin Grill, 351 West Bay Drive, Largo, 7 p.m.) will feature speakers on two issues of interest to our members. **David Plyer**, a Clearwater resident who has filed ethics complaints against Gov. Rick Scott and other Tallahassee officials for misconduct in office, will be talking to us about his complaints and what we need to do to take similar actions. In addition, two delegates from the 2008 Democratic National Convention, Club member **Kathryn Larkin** and **Nancy Hoppe**, will be talking to us about how they became delegates and what the delegate position entailed. Hopefully, they will encourage some of our members to run as national convention delegates in 2012. I'll be bringing copies of the new rules on delegate selection that the Florida Democratic Party is expected to approve on June 11.

For those who would like to get their feet wet as state convention delegates here in Florida in 2011, please contact me for applications (rpiper3404@aol.com or 727-588-0891). The Florida State Democratic Convention will be at Disney World from Oct. 28-30, 2011. I know that a number of you have served as delegates to previous state conventions, as I have, and have found the workshops and presentations very interesting and helpful. The convention should also be fun!

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Heidi Sanchez



FLORIDA'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

- **Sen. Bill Nelson** -
813 225-7040 or
(202) 224-5274
Email:
<http://billnelson.senate.gov/contact/index.cfm>
- **Sen. Marco Rubio** -
813 977-6450 or
(202) 224-3041 email:
http://rubio.senate.gov/contact_form.cfm
- **Rep. Bill Young** -
727 893-3191 or
(202)225-5961

Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
MONDAY, JUNE 20	7:00 PM - TBD	Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club	Thirsty Marlin Grill, 351 W. Bay Drive, Largo 33770
THURSDAY, JUNE 23	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	PCDEC	St. Pete Marriott Hotel, 12600 Roosevelt Blvd. N., St. Pete
SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2011	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Celebrate St. Pete Pride	Event Location: Central Avenue--St. Pete Description: Join the Stonewall Democrats as they participate in the annual St. Pete Pride parade. There will also be a Stonewall Democrats booth.
SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2011	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	OFA	Event Location: DEC HDQ--2250 First Avenue N. Event: Get involved with President Obama's re-election campaign. The Pinellas OFA is up and running and looking for volunteers. Please join them.

Date	Time	Event	Location
MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2011	11:30 AM - 2:00 PM	Democratic Women's Club of Upper Pinellas	Event Location: Golden Corral--10050 Ulmerton Rd, Largo Event Description: Guest Speaker is Mary Stanley. Mary is a self-made business woman, National Women's Political Caucus Activist, Republican turned Democrat and new Board member of VFA(Veterman Feminists of America)Senior Lunch is \$7.79 and Non-Senior Lunch \$8.29
Tuesday, June 28, 2011	6:30 PM - 9:00 PM	Soapbox Cinema presents "Home--A Stunning Visual Portrayal of Earth	Event Location: Gulfport Senior Center--5501 27th Avenue South Event Description: Home is a beautiful movie of our home planet. You will want to experience the wonderment of our world in a way that will thrill, enthrall and captivate you. Award winning aerial photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand and narrator Glenn Close take you on a spectacular voyage around the world which spans 54 countries and 120 locations.
THURSDAY, JUNE 30	1:30 PM - 4:00 PM	Anti-R-Senate Candidates/Press Event	Event Location: Vinoy Hotel And Resort Event Description: As part of the <i>Florida Society Of News Editors</i> annual convention, R Senate candidates will be appearing, as well as Bill Nelson. If you're tired of the media focusing on fluff pieces instead of real news -- like how the Senate has abdicated it's responsibility to the people in favor of corporate interests -- join us to let the press know it's time to do their jobs, like Howard Troxler always has! Thurs, June 30 1:30-4pm Vinoy Resort And Hotel 501 5th St. N.E. St. Petersburg, FL 33701 We need folks spreading the word, and help with making signs. Contact Mike Fox for more, or to RSVP. 727-320-4502 or tampabaydemocracy@yahoo.com Let's make some noise!
Friday, July 01, 2011	12:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Anti-Scott/Anti-Fluff Press Event	Event Location: Vinoy Hotel Event Description: As part of the Florida Society Of News Editors annual convention, Rick Scott will be appearing. If you're tired of the media focusing on fluff pieces instead of real news -- like how this man and his cohorts are ruining Florida -- join us to let the press know it's time to do their jobs, like Howard Troxler always has! Friday, July 1 12-3pm Vinoy Resort And Hotel 501 5th St. N.E. St. Petersburg, FL 33701 We need folks spreading the word, and help with making signs. Contact Mike Fox for more, or to RSVP. 727-320-

Date	Time	Event	Location
			4502 or tampabaydemocracy@yahoo.com Let's make some noise!
Saturday, July 02, 2011	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	OFA	Event Location: DEC HDQ--2250 First Avenue N. Event Description: Please join us to get President Obama re-elected. The Pinellas Team is up and running and needs you!

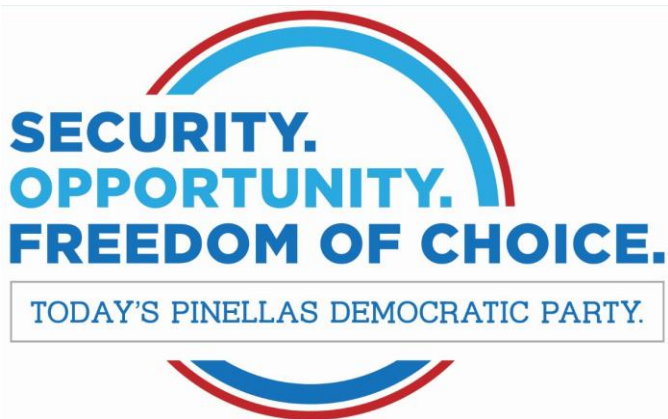
More Information available at: <http://www.pinellasdemocrats.com/events.asp?EventId=3358&nDate=6%2F25%2F2011>

Pinellas Democratic Party NEWS

A Few Choice Words

It's 18 months until the 2012 elections and the PCDEC already has okayed its first campaign piece! Thanks to Hal Alterman and Rich Piper, who came up with the themes, and Mo Eppley, the graphic designer, Pinellas Dems have a new logo: Security. Opportunity. Freedom of Choice. Today's Pinellas Democratic Party. This is the beginning of our messaging, so we all (grassroots workers and candidates alike) need to find opportunities to use as often as possible.

The Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democrat Club is producing buttons that we will be selling to spread the word and make a few dollars for our own war chest



Nationally Known Activist to Address Democratic Women's Club

National Women's Political Caucus activist, self-made businesswoman, Republican-turned-Democrat and powerful feminist Mary Stanley will speak at the June 27 meeting of the Democratic Women's Club of Upper Pinellas.

Ms Stanley made great friends among the women she helped elect and for whom she did pro bono fundraising BEFORE they became national icons --- including Donna Brazile, Senators Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer, Olympia Snowe and Nancy Kassebaum; and Congresswomen Maxine Waters and Jackie Speire. She also headed Republicans for Geraldine Ferraro for Vice President.

Ms Stanley's rich history and current activity have made her a powerful force for women. She has lots to talk about and will encourage questions/discussion.

The meeting is at the Golden Corral, 10050 Ulmerton Road, Largo. Social time/lunch start at 11:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome. Call Mary Freeman at 727 581-4630 for more information.

From the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee:

They've really done it this time. Health care. Pell grants. Now Medicare's on the chopping block.

Democrats think Medicare is a promise. Republicans think it's a litmus test.

Look, the GOP's got a vision for America, and it's no place you'd want to live. Only four Senate seats stand in their way. We can block their idiocy - for now. But if we lose our majority in 2012, we'll also lose Medicare, Social Security, health care reform - the safety net Americans depend upon.

Redistricting Hearings

Senate President Mike Haridopolos has challenged the Senate Reapportionment Committee to run the most open, transparent

and interactive redistricting process in our state's history. Listening to voters and constituents is where it starts. New redistricting standards in the Florida Constitution require the Legislature to draw lines based on factors unrelated to party and incumbency. [Public hearings](#) to gather such information are now more important than ever before. Please put this on your calendar:

Tuesday, August 30, 2011 – Largo
 8:00 - 11:00 AM* (* or until completion of meeting)
 EpiCenter at
 St. Pete College

Speaking of Picnics

Mark your calendar for Saturday, Oct. 15. That's the date of the **Largo/Mid-Pinellas second annual Old-Fashioned Democratic Picnic**. Location is Taylor Lake Park off 8th Avenue in Largo. Theresa Fedorczyk will once again be chairing.

St. Petersburg Democratic Club's annual Memorial Day picnic at the War Veteran's Memorial Park.

Tickets for the all-you-can-eat hot dogs and pot luck will be on sale soon and still at the budget-sparing price of \$5, kids 12 and under free.

Greater Pinellas Democratic Club picnic at Fort DeSoto



Mary Freeman and husband Shelby chill out at the Greater Pinellas Democratic Club picnic at Fort De Soto.



Belleair Bluffs Councilman Joe Barkley and his wife, and club secretary, Mary Lou Ambrose represent the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club.

Photo by Rich Piper



Florida House District 53 Rep. Rick Kriseman addresses crowd at St. Pete Democratic Club Picnic

Photo by Rich Piper



Bill Nobles, who has announced that he will run against state Rep. Jeff Brandes, speaks at the Democratic Club picnic

Photo by Rich Piper

'I'm In' Campaign

ARE YOU IN?

President Obama recently kicked off his reelection campaign with a quiet video titled "It Begins with Us" rather than the usual hoopla.

You can let them know that you "are in" at barackobama.com or for local efforts you can contact club president Rich Piper at rpiper3404@aol.com or board member Deb Anderson at deborah-anderson@verizon.net.

National Obama for America Field Director Meets With Pinellas OFA Team Leaders

Club members Deb Anderson, Heidi Sanchez, Wanda Schwerer and Rich Piper were among some 25 Pinellas activists who met with National OFA Field Director Jeremy Bird on June 11 as part of the Obama campaign's call to action.



OFA leaders Bernadette Ohran, Ashley Walker and Jeremy Bird.

Photo by Heidi Sanchez

Bird, who was in Tampa for a two-day training session for OFA "summer organizers," was accompanied by Ashley Walker, the OFA Director for Florida. He told the group that Pinellas County has one of the most advanced OFA volunteer organizations in the country and expressed his delight that we are already making great progress in organizing for 2012. Bernadette Ohran of St. Petersburg has been named coordinator for all of the OFA teams that have formed or are forming in Pinellas

County. The statewide campaign is housed in Tampa.



*Rich Piper and Jeremy Bird
Photo by Heidi Sanchez*



*Some of those attending the OFA meeting
Photo by Heidi Sanchez*

To continue expanding the corps of volunteers, Deb Anderson and Rich Piper will hold an information session and phone bank from 10 a.m. until noon on Saturday, June 18, in the Seminole Library at St. Petersburg College, Community Room A.

All who are interested in volunteering for the 2012 Obama campaign are encouraged to attend and to bring a cell phone if you have one. Our goal is to reach out to 2008 volunteers and to get them activated again and also to find new recruits for 2012.

Team Pinellas Gets a Surprise Visit

Posted by Tim S., Neighborhood Team Leader, Pinellas County Florida on June 7.

After working on Vice President Biden's campaign in 2008, I was looking for a way to make a meaningful contribution to this 2012 campaign. Two weeks ago I signed up on BarackObama.com and saw a Team Leadership event in my area, so I planned to attend and get involved.

Last weekend I attended the meeting and after my 1-1 meeting, I was officially "IN". I met more organizers during a mid-week training session and this weekend our volunteer meeting was filled to capacity. It was a busy week, but I'm ready to tackle all of the new work.

Team Pinellas is growing every day, and this weekend brought a great surprise. Our Florida State Director, Ashley Walker, dropped by our team meeting with very special guest, National Field Director Jeremy Bird.

After Jeremy gave an overview of the campaign, he and Ashley answered questions for over an hour. Jeremy stressed that the lines of communication are open to everyone involved with the campaign.

My advice to everyone is get involved, volunteer, and spread the word. After all, you never know who might show up at your next team meeting!

OFA PREPARES FOR HIGH TECH 2012 CAMPAIGN

By Heidi Sanchez

Obama for America plans to run "the most effective, creative and innovative digital campaign in the history of politics, and our digital team will be core to achieving the communications, fundraising and organizing goals of the cause. The campaign will be built around barackobama.com and a suite of other web and mobile properties." A team of OFA organizers is fanning out around the country to develop the support and expertise to make that happen.

Obama activists from throughout Pinellas County met at the St. Petersburg Democratic

Headquarters on May 31 to gear up for the 2012 campaign. They met with Bernadette Ohran, community organizer and dedicated Obama volunteer extraordinaire, and Dan Finer, the state data director for Obama for America (a project of the DNC), who is based in Tampa. Among the attendees were our club President Rich Piper and club photographer Heidi Sanchez.

The purpose of the meeting was to learn about the new social networking and data reporting website, National Field, developed by OFA.

The site allows activists to communicate with each other and the national campaign in order to keep track of goals, accomplishments, needs, shared issues. The site will permit the campaign to evaluate ongoing volunteer efforts and identify areas where changes might be needed or additional support provided.

Once volunteers sign up on the site, they can input messages and report on their activities and they receive daily updates.

We were also provided access to the updated Votebuilder site containing information about campaign volunteers and voters throughout Florida. It is used to gather information to develop a strong volunteer network and to identify likely voters and to contact them (by phone or door-to-door) throughout the campaign.

It is also used for virtual phonebanking, allowing volunteers to make calls (from lists and scripts provided by the campaign) and enter the results simultaneously into Votebuilder (locally or even from other locations around the country). Anyone who has helped with calls in campaigns in other areas (including the recent successful congressional race in upstate New York) has already used virtual phonebanking.

The easy-to-use procedure maximizes the accuracy of input, keeps the database up-to-date and eliminates duplicative calls, and uses volunteer time efficiently (by eliminating the need for volunteers to input results reported by other callers) as well as reducing reliance on paper printouts and travel required to move lists from the caller's location to the data entry location. Virtual phonebanking is efficient, flexible, saves money, and is environmentally

sound! The new and improved Votebuilder has been expanded with more fields that should make it an even more useful tool than it has been so far.

Finally, we spent some time inputting the information gathered on the volunteer sheets that were distributed and filled out during our

club's May meeting. This information will be used through Votebuilder to reach out to volunteers as the campaign proceeds and to encourage them to be involved in order to achieve the results we all hope for in 2012

Club News

May Meeting Attracts Full House

Dr. Mona Mangat, the southeaster regional director of Doctors for America, was the guest speaker at the May meeting. This is an organization that was formed in 2008 to help get the Affordable Care Act passed, and since its inception, Dr. Mangat has worked tirelessly to educate other physicians about the real impact health reform will have on the practice of medicine.

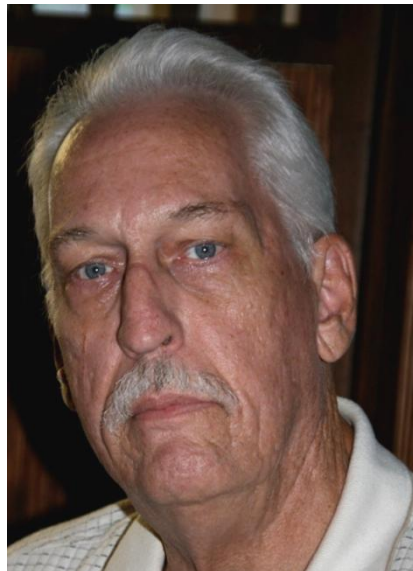
Along with taking care of young children and maintaining her busy private practice as an allergist and immunologist in St. Pete, she has been giving presentations throughout the area to educate citizens about the importance of greater access to quality, affordable health care for all and to try to debunk

misconceptions. She is also responsible for recruiting and mentoring new volunteer leaders in Florida and the surrounding states and has been interviewed countless times to represent doctors views on health reform. Mona is one of the reasons doctors voices are being heard among decision-makers in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.

The Q and A following her Power Point presentation was quite lively Members also had an opportunity to meet OFA field rep Torrey Craig and learn about energy conservation from Jonathan Skinner from the Pinellas County Extension's Energy Efficiency Project. Jonathan also came bearing gifts of the compact fluorescent light bulbs that use 75 percent less energy and last 10 times longer than standard incandescent bulbs.



Dr. Mona Mangat of Doctors for America
Photo by Heidi Sanchez



Torrey Craig, field rep for Obama for America 2012
Photo by Heidi Sanchez



Jonathan Skinner, Pinellas County PEEP rep
Photo by Heidi Sanchez

LETTERS and OPINIONS

OPINIONS

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS WE NEED TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN THINKING ABOUT HOW HARD WE'RE WILLING TO WORK TO GET SOME GOOD DEMOCRATS ELECTED.

Gov. Rick Scott undermines Florida's water policy

Piece by piece, Florida's water policy is being dismantled. First, Gov. Rick Scott and the Legislature forced the state's water management districts to slash property tax collections. Then the Scott administration pressured the Southwest Florida Water Management District to eliminate its local basin boards, and its executive director to resign. Now the administration is overturning decisions by water management districts to buy property to protect water supplies. Such political interference by a governor is unprecedented, and it undermines the professional management of the state's water resources. (From a St. Pete Times June 8 editorial)

THE ENEMIES OF FLORIDA'S ENVIRONMENT

Republican Gov. Rick Scott and the GOP-led Legislature appear bent on destroying Florida's environment and overturning decades of efforts to protect it by governors and lawmakers from both political parties. They would give developers free rein to pave over what's left, prevent local communities from cleaning up bays and rivers and enable homeowners to dump raw sewage into the drinking water supply. They want to delegate planning issues to local governments where developers can more easily win — and grab statewide control over issues such as fertilizing lawns to prevent local restrictions. In the rush to create jobs and lure businesses, they are making Florida less attractive as a place to live and work. (From a St. Pete Times April 3 editorial.)

THE ENEMIES OF DEMOCRATIC, YOUNG AND MINORITY VOTERS

One of the most promising recent trends in expanding political participation has been allowing people to vote in the weeks before Election Day, either in person or by mail. Early voting skyrocketed to a third of the vote in 2008, rising particularly in the South and among black voters supporting Barack Obama.

And that, of course, is why Republican lawmakers in the South are trying desperately to cut it back. It is the latest element of a well-coordinated effort by Republican state legislators across the country to disenfranchise voters who tend to support Democrats, particularly minorities and young people. (From a New York Times June 6 editorial.)

MORE ON SUPPRESSING DEMOCRACY OR 'A MODERN WHIFF OF JIM CROW'

Determined not to let this whole democracy thing get out of hand, the GOP-held Legislature crafted a bill that reduces the number of early voting days from 15 to eight, and requires some voters who have moved to cast provisional ballots, a deliberate inconvenience aimed at students.

Historically, provisional ballots are counted at a much lower rate than regular ones, meaning many young voters won't get heard — exactly what Scott and the Republican leadership want.

The new bill also throws out a rule that had been in effect for 40 years allowing Floridians to update their legal addresses when they arrive to vote. Now you can only do that if you moved within the same county.

To hinder community groups that register first-time voters, the law requires volunteers for organizations such as the League of Women Voters to register with the state as if they were sex offenders.

Upon signing the anti-voting bill into law, Gov. Spaceman said the following: "I want people to vote, but I also want to make sure there's no fraud involved in elections. All of us as individuals that vote want to make sure that our elections are fair and honest."

Those who recall what happened here in the 2000 presidential election can't help but chuckle at the comic aspect of a Republican governor pretending to fret about voter fraud.

The effort to manipulate elections by making it difficult for some people to vote has been around since the nation was founded. It's a strategy that was infamously codified in the Deep South by "literacy tests" intended to disenfranchise black citizens, which prompted the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Congressional Democrats have asked the Justice Department to block Florida's new law, which already took effect in all but five counties – Monroe, Hendry, Hardee, Collier and Hillsborough. There the federal government must approve changes to voter-eligibility rules.

In addition to impeding potential Democratic voters, Republicans lawmakers have tacked several items on the November 2012 ballot in hopes of galvanizing their own base. You'll see an anti-abortion amendment, an anti-Obamacare amendment and still another measure that would allow tax dollars to be funneled to religious institutions.

The GOP's dream scenario is a low turnout dominated by a grumpy, aging core of conservative white people who can't stand Obama. With their party outnumbered on Florida's voter rolls, top Republicans hope that rigging the voting rules will improve their chances to recapture the White House. (From TangerineFlorida blog.)

Fair Districts Fight Goes On

The U.S Justice Department has ruled that Florida's Fair Districts Amendments (5 for Congress and 6 for Congress) are okay to use for 2012, when election districts must be redrawn. Sounds like a done deal, doesn't it? But this is just the beginning and don't think for a minute that the Republicans – and at least one Democrat – are going quietly into that good night.

The aim of the amendments – which were passed by 63 percent of the vote – is to depoliticize the redistricting process by prohibiting drawing legislative and

congressional districts to benefit certain member or parties.

According to the Miami Herald, "Despite the most brutal budget cuts in state history, the taxpayers of Florida still have millions set aside for their epic battle against the taxpayers of Florida."

Both houses of the Florida Legislature managed to find plenty of money – also known as your money – for the slush funds underwriting their costly lawsuit against the Fair Districts amendments.

The Orlando Sentinel reported that "the legislative leadership has figured on spending \$20 million, and plenty more if necessary, to preserve their sacred right to re-draw state Senate, state representative and congressional districts in whatever squished-out, crazy-map shapes best protect their political self-interest."

Rod Smith Vows to Transform Florida Democratic Party

Seeking to rebound from November's historic drubbing, Florida Democratic Chairman Rod Smith laid out a "transformation plan" this weekend as more than 1,000 Democrats gathered for the party's annual Jefferson-Jackson fund-raising dinner.

The plan calls for boosting money-raising, improving candidate recruitment and strengthening local Democratic organizations.

But the biggest transformation plan for Democrats in 2012, according to many of the partisans at the Westin Diplomat Hotel this weekend, may be invoking Republican Gov. Rick Scott and his dismal popularity ratings.

"We've got a job-killing governor in Rick Scott who has the worst approval ratings of any governor in recent or long-term history," said Democratic National Committee Chairwoman and U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

A Quinnipiac University poll last month showed 57 percent of Floridians disapproving of Scott's job performance, with only 29 percent approving. (Palm Beach Post)

Florida Politics Blog's First 'Ahem' on 2014 Governor's Race

By Robert McKnight

Although it is a full three years away, there are already discussions about which Democrat might take on **Republican Rick Scott**. I have no crystal ball on any of my "**Ahems**," I just try to apply a logic train to the issue at hand. Here it is on the 2014 Governor's race against Scott:

1. Dems need a solid, proven vote getter that can keep the Party together (as in the Chairman of the Party).
2. Dems need to manage the diverse interests of the party to avoid self-annihilation (again, probably the Chairman of the Party).
3. Dems need a candidate for Governor who has a tie in to big financial donors (same deal, the Chairman of the Party).

This one really wasn't hard--**Democratic Party Chairman Rod Smith**.

Ironic, Isn't It?

"Sen. Marco Rubio was hired to "co-teach" four classes at a state university for \$24,000 – three times the normal rate. He won his Senate seat because of the tea party, which has shown so much animosity to federal and state workers. Rubio now is both." (From a SPT letter to the editor)

Hail and Farewell

By Kathleen Jamison

Howard Troxler's last St. Pete Times column ran June 12 and I, for one, don't know what the reasonable, fair-minded folks (Democrat, Republican or Independent) are going to do without him. He's by turns cynical, sarcastic, pessimistic, you name it. But, at the same time, always encouraging politicians, power brokers, developers, us regular folks to seek out our better angels.

He ended his latest golden prose by confessing that "lately I have been feeling more and more optimistic, precisely because more and more Floridians realize what is happening. This state is coming into an interesting and exciting time, a battle afresh for its future, and its soul."

He said he'll be keeping an eye on us from North Carolina. Why not let him see that Florida Democrats can be the champions of "fixing Florida"?

As Howard has written so many times over the years, we need leadership that will "grow the state better, smarter, wisely." Democrats have a golden opportunity to step up to the bat and provide that leadership.

As Paul Starr is fond of saying "We're Democrats and that's what Democrats do."

For Your Information

Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club Board of Directors

President Rich Piper President@largodemocrats.com	Vice President Lois Fries
Secretary Mary Lou Ambrose Admin@largodemocrats.com	Treasurer Elizabeth Snedeker
Director/webmaster Wanda Schwerer Admin@largodemocrats.com	Director Mary Ellen Lansburg
Director Samantha Ingram	Director/photographer Heidi Sanchez
Director Lodewijk van den Berg,	Director Ginny Nelson
Director	Director/newsletter

Deb Anderson	editor Kathleen Jamison
Outreach Coordinator Charlotte Maas	Director

All of the officers were elected February, 2011, to serve until their term ends in February 2013.

Additional contact information is available on www.largodemocrats.com – click on Opinions and Letters

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, Kathleen Jamison, at Editor@largodemocrats.com

If you don't wish to receive this newsletter, let Editor Kathleen Jamison know. She will also be happy to add more folks to our newsletter email list. (Please forward to anyone you know who may be interested in what we do and how to join.) Her address is newsletter@largodemocrats.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 administrator@largodemocrats.com

For membership information, email Admin@largodemocrats.com

ANNUAL DUES ARE JUST \$10

CHANGE, YES WE CAN!