

The Delray Democrat

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How The DeSantis Saved Democracy

Jeff Kash

On the eighth day, God created a fighter and that fighter unwittingly saved democracy.

Only four years ago, 21.25 million people lived in Florida. Of those, 4,718,720 were registered to vote as Republicans. That year, DeSantis received 4,076,186 votes, narrowly beating his Democratic opponent.

Then came the pandemic and the governor's special brand of freedom. Freedom that not only rang throughout the land, but resonated with those red-hat-loving patriots everywhere. Like their forefathers before them who set out for the gold fields of the Yukon or fled the dust bowl of Oklahoma, they migrated. Only instead of pursuing riches or fleeing poverty, they came for the freedom.

More than 600 people a day moved to Florida seeking freedom from mandates and freedom from wokeness. Most of those who came were not the kind of folks that you can stop with a fortified southern border or put on a charter flight to the Vineyard. They came from elsewhere in the U.S. of A., many waving their flags and their guns, happy to be free of left-wing oppression.

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The Red Wave That Wasn't . . . and the One That Was

Michael K. Cantwell

Democracy dodged a bullet for the third election in a row. Not since the 1962 midterms has a Democratic president done better in his first midterm. Democrats held the Senate and only narrowly lost the House, and every election denier who ran for the top election office in a battleground state lost.

The So-Called Liberal Media was largely responsible for that bullet, with their insistent hyperventilating headlines and news tickers about inflation. Anyone who looked beyond the sizzle learned that inflation was a worldwide problem largely caused by factors beyond the control of Biden or Democrats, but such readers and viewers are a vanishing breed. And good news – historic increases in jobs and wages and the decreases in unemployment – was relegated to the single day a month those statistics were released.

The consequent, almost gleeful, predictions of a Red Wave were derailed by a debased Supreme Court's indefensible decision overruling Roe. The SCLM began suggesting the election might not be so terrible for Democrats . . . but never dreamt how terrible it would be for Republicans.

Looking ahead, holding the Senate is a huge win. McConnell won't be able to steal any more Supreme Court seats and Biden can continue filling judicial openings at a record pace, ameliorating some of the Constitutional carnage caused by Trump.

In the House, the oafish Kevin McCarthy will be buffeted about like some inflatable roadside advertising man, torn between the need to appear to be human and the need to satisfy the revenge fantasies of Donald Trump and the dictates of the barely sane Marjorie Taylor Greene. As "my Kevin" pursues baseless investigations and impeachments and tries to shut down the government, he will again demonstrate why Republicans are unfit to govern.

In Florida, the Red Wave that Was helped preserve democracy nationally, as Jeff Kash explains above, albeit at great cost to those of living here.

The midterms were a momentary reprieve from the Trumpian Republican Party's march to fascism. Yet only a fool would fail to see the "clear and present danger" to democracy that remains (see page 7).

(Continued from page 1)

Florida's population now stands at more than 22 million. That is an increase of about 750,000 new residents. Of those 22 million, the number of registered Republicans has grown to 5,259,406. That's an increase of nearly 541,000 registered Republicans in four years.

Clearly, Florida is no longer a purple battleground state with a chance of turning blue.

The good news, the news for which we should thank the governor, is that by syphoning off the MAGA-hatted from the cold weather and dangerous socialism of places like Pennsylvania and Michigan, he helped Democrats hold two governors' offices

On the eighth day, God created a fighter and that fighter unwittingly saved democracy.

As we know, this year, DeSantis trounced his Democratic opponent, receiving 4,610,988 votes. That's 534,000 more than he got in 2018 and almost exactly the number of newly minted Florida freedom loving Republicans.

and flip a senate seat. The feared red wave broke against the sea wall of Democrats who did not succumb to the siren song of the sunshine state and voted to protect choice and real freedom and democracy.

The Winds of War

Steve Fradkin

Ever stop to think about how the next American Revolutionary War will begin? Forget Lexington and Concord. Forget Bunker Hill. No, this one will start differently.

- This one will involve assault rifles and concealed pistols, used to terrorize and kill school children, worshippers, minorities and more.
- This one will see deadly threats and violent attacks on elected officials and their families.
- This one will pit neighbor against neighbor, with no room for rational dialogue or compromise.
- This one will disenfranchise "others" — children, people of color, seniors, immigrants.
- This one will punish schools, charities and businesses for daring to disagree with the ones who make the rules.

- This one will begin with lying candidates, angry voters, and laws that will take away our rights and freedoms.
- This one will feature armed vigilantes to discourage voting, violent insurrections to negate voting, and massive accusations of cheating and denial of election results.

Sound familiar? Yes, friends, it has already begun. Paul Revere may be long gone, but his warnings echo through the night. "The fascists are coming! The totalitarians are coming."

We can't just let them come, fellow patriots. We must resist. We must pursue every good fight, resist every restriction, speak out at every opportunity, and send the revolutionaries back to their caves.

The winds of war are rising, swirling all around us, and we ignore them at our own peril. America is at stake. Let's get together and save her.

Democratic Club of Delray Beach Officers and Directors

Michael Cantwell, President; Char Lane, Vice-President; Cheryl Perry, Secretary; David Kulick, Treasurer; Robert Averack, Parliamentarian; Peter Camacho, Mary Fader, Charlie Holbrook, June Neal, and Robert Resnick, Directors; Sandra Elaisse-Cantwell, Director Emerita; and John Ramos, Director Emeritus.

Protect Women's Rights in Florida By Amending the State Constitution

David Kulick

When the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs* overturned the 1973 *Roe vs Wade* ruling that legalized abortion nationwide, it gave Democrats a potent issue for the November midterms. Just how much of an issue became clear in August when deep-red Kansas voted against a state constitutional amendment that would have allowed legislators to restrict abortion.

Abortion rights were directly on the ballot in five states. Voters either supported enshrining the right to reproductive decisions in the state constitution or rejected attempts to enact further limits on abortion. In Michigan, California, and Vermont, the voters chose to allow the right to abortion and in Kentucky and Montana they rejected further restrictions. That is in both blue and red states.

which many of us believe was a reasonable compromise.

There are two reasons for doing so. The first is that it is critical to preserve a woman's right to choose. Abortion is a decision that requires serious consideration, as it involves the termination of a potential human being, but it is a decision that must rest with the mother. Abortions will always occur; the only question is whether they will be done safely.

The second reason is more cynical. A vote on this issue is certain to get people who would otherwise not vote out to vote, and they are likely to vote Democratic. Anti-Abortion people are crusaders, they will always turn out and usually vote Republican.

Abortion is a decision that requires serious consideration . . . but it is a decision that must rest with the mother

In Florida, the latest restrictions passed by the Republican legislature effectively limit abortion to 15 weeks and 6 days. There are quite a few other restrictions, including requiring minors to obtain parental permission, and there are no exceptions for rape or incest. With the newly elected Republican supermajorities, the legislature is already considering lowering the limit to 12 weeks while adding an exception for rape or incest.

We have no idea what the Republicans will eventually pass. The solution to this situation is to begin the process of having a constitutional amendment to enshrine abortion rights into the state constitution, likely along the lines of *Roe vs Wade*,

This is the text of the Vermont amendment:

Article 22. [Personal reproductive liberty]

That an individual's right to personal reproductive autonomy is central to the liberty and dignity to determine one's own life course and shall not be denied or infringed unless justified by a compelling State interest achieved by the least restrictive means.

Of course, we'll need to spell it out more specifically given the Florida legislature's propensity for undermining constitutional amendments.

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

Letters by Our Members

We're very proud to count among our members state senator Lori Berman. Here's a letter she recently published in the *Sun-Sentinel*:

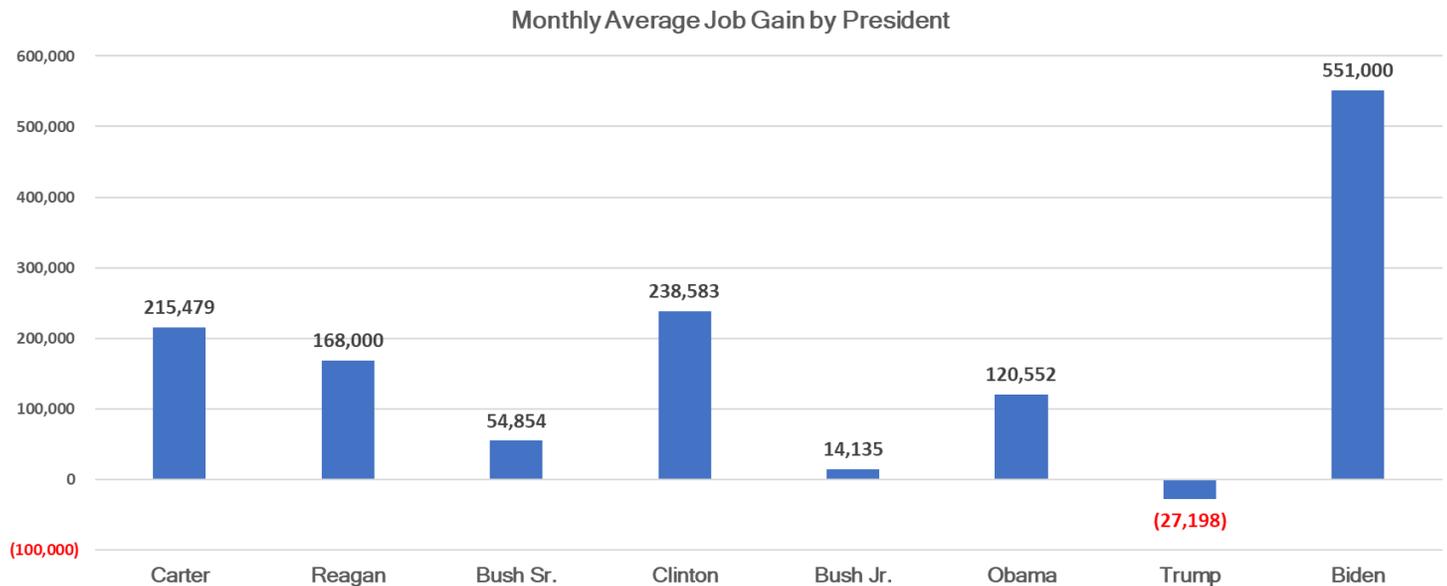
It's official: We won the race for Senate District 26 by more than 20,000 votes. The residents of Wellington, Boynton Beach, Delray Beach, Boca Raton and the Glades resoundingly rejected the harmful policies of my Republican opponent and the politics of division. Instead, they chose a better and a brighter future for Florida.

Here's my promise to you: I'll be a state senator for all of the residents of this district. I will do all I can to address the issues our community cares most about: solving Florida's affordability crisis, expanding access to quality healthcare, protecting public education and women's rights, advocating for common sense gun safety measures, protecting our environment and developing our local economy.

I want to thank everyone who volunteered, donated to and supported our campaign over the past several months. I hear you. I see you. It's the honor of my life to represent you in the halls of our state Capitol.

Lori Berman, Boynton Beach, November 13
The writer is the state senator from District 26, Palm Beach County

Keep up the Good Work, Mr. President



Data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/CES0000000001>

Atonement¹

Michael K. Cantwell

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Florida law that DeSantis bumptiously refers to as the “Stop Woke Act” but is more appropriately labeled “The Snowflake Protection Act.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹Published by *The Palm Beach Post* on November 13 with a different title and without the epigraph.

A More Perfect Union

Michael K. Cantwell

The drafters of the United States Constitution would be sickened by the slogan, “Make America Great Again,” which sounds more like a translation of *Deutschland Uber Alles* than anything intended by the Founders whom Republicans so repeatedly and hypocritically invoke

The basis of “the more perfect Union” over which they labored the long hot summer of 1787 in Philadelphia was a Constitution that moved forward rather than backward. As Thomas Jefferson later [wrote](#), the U.S. Constitution was never designed to be frozen in time:

Some men look at Constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, & deem them . . . too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment . . . [but] . . . laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times.

The historical backdrop for the Constitution was America’s original organizational document, the Articles of Confederation, under which the federal government had little power and the Thirteen States resembled separate countries. The great Twentieth

We became a more perfect union and a better country when we passed laws – albeit a full century *after* the Civil War ended – guaranteeing African Americans the right to vote and protecting marginalized citizens from discrimination. We became a more perfect union and a better country when our Supreme Court recognized the right of women to control their own bodies and people to marry whomever they chose.

But these advances threatened those who feared the loss of privileges afforded the white male, and Republicans exploited those fears to divide us and sow hatred for their own advancement. Richard Nixon provided the roadmap with his Southern Strategy and dog-whistle appeals to “Law and Order,” but the most effective messenger and the man who did the most damage was that genial huckster, Ronald Reagan.

Beneath his amiable affect and his “aw shucks” campaign slogan, “Let’s Make America Great Again,” lay his racist tropes of “Cadillac-driving Welfare Queens” and “Strapping Young Bucks using food stamps to buy T-bone steaks while you’re waiting in line to buy hamburger.” Thirty years later, *ecce bestia*, Donald Trump threw away the dog whistle and picked up a bullhorn, with his naked appeals to racism, cruelty, and fear.

We became a more perfect union and a better country when we abolished slavery, when we gave women the franchise, and when we created programs like Social Security, unemployment insurance, and Medicare, Medicaid, and Obamacare to assist the needy and protect the vulnerable.

Century jurist Benjamin Cardozo explained the difference as follows:

The Constitution was framed . . . upon the theory that the peoples of the several states must sink or swim together, and that in the long run prosperity and salvation are in union and not division.

In fits and starts, the generations who followed have given substance to that aspiration. We became a more perfect union and a better country when we emancipated the slaves, gave women the franchise, and when we created programs like Social Security, unemployment insurance, and Medicare, Medicaid, and Obamacare to assist the needy and protect the vulnerable.

For the white working class, whether seduced by Reagan or driven into frenzies by Trump, there was no mistaking the meaning of “Make America Great Again.” America’s “greatness” lay in the 1950s, a time when African Americans knew their place (in the back of the bus and not in the voting booths), women knew their place (in the kitchen and the nursery), and LGBTQ people knew their place (deep in the closet).

Republicans never mention the best part of the 1950s—the creation of a middle class that was the envy of the world—because neither they nor their paymasters have any wish to resurrect an era in which income inequality was at its lowest level in

(Continued on page 7)

“Clear and Present Danger”

Michael K. Cantwell

Testifying before the January 6 Committee, the highly respected, very conservative appellate judge J. Michael Luttig described Donald Trump and his allies as “a Clear and Present danger to American democracy.”

We are rightly celebrating the defeat of every election denier who ran for the highest office responsible for overseeing voting in any swing state – the only election denier who won was in deep-red Indiana. Yet many election deniers were elected or reelected to the House, beginning with the barely sane Marjorie Taylor Greene.

Long before Rudy Giuliani admitted to former Arizona House Speaker Rusty Bowers that, “We’ve got lots of theories, we just don’t have the evidence,” Republicans have failed to find evidence of systemic voter fraud sufficient to change elections,

The decades-long record of failure begins with a DOJ investigation under George W. Bush and continues through the commission established by Donald Trump to prove that millions of votes were stolen in the 2016 election.

Donald Trump is merely a symptom of the disease that has been the Republican Party for decades.

Indeed, the overwhelming majority of Republican representatives who challenged Biden’s election were themselves reelected, albeit by smaller margins in some cases.

Moreover, Donald Trump is merely a symptom of the disease that has been the Republican Party for decades before Trump became a Republican. If the claim that Donald Trump won the 2020 election is a Big Lie, it was built atop another Big Lie – one that Republicans have been spewing for decades, namely, that voter fraud is rampant.

Most comical and ridiculous is the “Election Fraud Database” maintained by The Heritage Foundation, which proves the opposite. The “1,384 proven instances of voter fraud” trumpeted by the online database, which extends back into the 1990s, translate into about one instance per state per year

Although our worst fears were averted in the midterms, we must not forget – and we must constantly remind others, particularly members of the So-Called Liberal Media – that the threat to our democracy is far from ended.

(Continued from page 6)

American history, courtesy of FDR and his New Deal.

It was a time when CEOs earned 20 times as much as the average worker, a far cry from today, when they are paid 351 times as much as the average worker; it was a time when the wealthiest Americans were taxed at a higher rate than average Americans instead of today, when they are taxed at a lower rate; it was a time when corporations contributed 33% of the taxes collected by the Treasury, instead of today, when they contribute a measly 7%; and it was a time when 35% of the workforce belonged to unions, instead of today when only 10.3% of Americans are unionized. Unions keep wages fair – not only for their members but for non-union workers at companies that feared being targets of unionizing.

So where do we go from here? The Republican game plan is to double-down on culture wars and Big Lies, moving the country backwards to an era in which the stench of racism, hatred, fear, The Supreme Court and lower courts have been packed with revanchist zealots who are not content with simply undoing *Roe* but would like to return to the pre-Constitution era when the individual states had virtual autonomy and freedom to do as they wished.

Next on the agenda of the Sam Alito and is the overruling of *Obergefell*, returning to the States the decision on whose marriage is worthy of recognition—despite the fact that 70% of Americans support gay marriage.

As Steve Fradkin argues on page 2, they are hellbent on refighting the Civil War and destroying the dreams of our Founders.

2023 Membership

Char Lane

We are fast approaching the end of 2022 and it's time to renew your DCDB membership for 2023. Membership is on a calendar year basis and your dues help provide funding for operational projects, such as The Delray Democrat, our meetings, other working supplies and signage for our sign waving events. Meetings are the third Thursday (note change of day) of each month at the Pompey Park Recreation Center. We met via zoom from April 2020 through September 2022 and finally resumed live meetings at Pompey Park last month. Our change of meeting day is due to room availability.

Our goal is to educate people as to why they should vote Democratic and use Vote-by-Mail as a critical tool in support of this goal. We'll have to work hard to help keep our democracy intact and protect it from the manifesting lunacy. We planned to help turn Florida BLUE in 2022, but were thwarted by the circumstances as noted in the articles by Michael Cantwell and Jeff Kash in this issue.

If you're a member of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach, please renew. If you're not a member of the Club, please consider joining.

Please visit us at www.demclubofdelray.org,

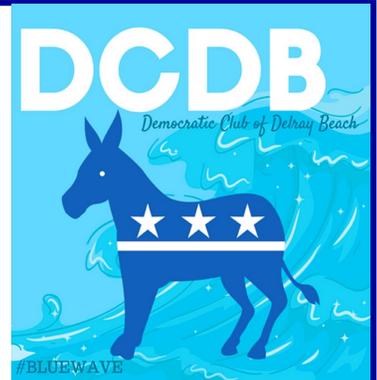
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Become a member of the DCDB by going to <https://www.demclubofdelray.org/membership> or filling out and mailing the application below or by scanning the QR code below:



Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2023 Membership Application and Renewal



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Address _____

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