



## DWCLA Club Representatives Attend the 68th DWCF Annual Convention

Our Club sent 9 representatives to the Democratic Women’s Club of Florida 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention themed “PerSisters Protecting Freedom and Democracy” in Orlando from May 16-19. Susan Reale provided the following summary of the event.

Attending the DWCF conference was an enriching experience, providing valuable insights, skills, and connections to further the cause of women's political participation and leadership. Overall, it was a powerful and enlightening experience! Key highlights included:

- **Speeches from prominent leaders in the community, including:** Rep. Fentrice Driskell; Sen. Jason Pizzo; Rep. Carlos Guillermo Smith; Rep. Anna Eskimani; Rep. Kristen Arrington; Rep. Rita Harris; Rep. Dan Daley; Rep. Angie Nixon; Council Woman Pat Kemp.
- **Networking with other leaders and activists:** We had lots of opportunities to connect with like-minded individuals, building a strong support network of women in politics and advocacy during the fun breaks, including a wine and cheese event, during meals, and at the banner parade, etc.
- **Panel discussion/workshop topics:** Fund raising tips; Leveraging social media to advance outreach; Building and fostering fairness and equity.
- **Participants left the conference with actionable plans** - to implement in their own communities or organizations and



DWCF Conference attendees during the banner parade increased motivation to drive change and support women's political participation!

Of note, our own Cathy Moon, DWCLA associate member and PC Democratic Women's Club president, received the Rising Star award! Congratulations Cathy! You deserve this recognition for your work!



Loretta Chandler and Kerry A. Lundeen enjoying the wine and cheese reception



## OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE

The primary elections for our Democratic Party will be held on Aug. 20, 2024. This will be the chance for registered voters to show their preference for candidates within their party to participate in the general election. A slate of Democrat candidates for our national, state and local elections is provided below (a tip of the hat to Leslie Skeans for putting this together). Here are some of the important deadlines:

- Deadline to send vote-by-mail ballots to UOCAVA voters: July 6, 2024
- Deadline to send vote-by-mail ballots to domestic voters: July 11 – 18, 2024
- Deadline to register to vote or change party affiliation: July 22, 2024
- Deadline to request that ballot be mailed: August 8, 2024
- Early voting period (mandatory period): August 10 – 17, 2024
- Election Day: August 20, 2024

And while you are considering your choices, don't forget that your contributions to campaigning (both volunteering and monetary) will be very important in this election. The stakes for democracy and women's rights are higher than ever in our time. Volunteers will be needed for a wide range of activities in the coming months to support the effort. Please contact one of our Club's Campaign Committee Co-Chairs: Denise Matthews (706-340-3774); Rissi Cherie (386-972-4324) or go to our [website](#) to participate!

## FLORIDA DEMOCRAT PRIMARY SLATE

### President/Vice President:

Joseph Biden/Kamala Harris

### US Senate: (running against Rick Scott)

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell

Stanley Campbell

Rod Joseph

Brian Rush

### State Attorney Circuit Court 8 :

Yvens Pierre-Antoine

### US House:

District 3 - Tom Wells

District 6 - James Stockdon

District 4 - LaShonda "LJ" Holloway

District 11 - Charles 'Charlie' Browne

### Florida House of Representatives:

District 10 - Robert 'Bobby' J. Brady

District 20 - Anthony 'Tony' Connolly

### Florida State Senate:

District 7 - George Anthony

### Bradford County Commission:

Carolyn Spooner

### Bradford School Board (NPA):

Mitchell Gunter

### Clay County School Board (NPA) :

4 Candidates (clayelections.gov)



## CLUB EVENTS



## Speaker's Corner



### For April, a focus on Mother Earth

By Kate Ellison

Our club invited David Vaina, a member of the Executive Committee of the Suwannee St. Johns Group of the Sierra Club to speak to us about this year's legislative session.

A native Floridian currently living in Alachua County, he has 20 years of experience in non-profits, including stints as the statewide Education Director for the Gainesville-based Florida Organic Growers, and as a research analyst for the Pew Research Center in Washington D.C. He recently completed his PhD in political theory. His dissertation investigated emerging labor and political practices organized intentionally to regenerate both the human community and a natural world increasingly degraded by climate change. David has a strong interest in sustainable agriculture and urban gardening. He is a Florida Master Gardener and has taught organic gardening at Santa Fe College in Gainesville.

Although he was unable to come in person, we scrambled to arrange for a Zoom presentation. He reviewed some of the many bad and a few good bills that passed the legislature this year, from an environmental point of view. Everglades restoration got the lion's share of funding, but the Springs and Land Acquisition got the minimum. A bill passed that prohibits the installation of wind energy, prohibits using the phrase "climate crisis," and



blocks cities and counties from trying to protect workers by requiring water and shade breaks. Another bill opened opportunities for hunting black bears instead of requiring or providing bear-proof trash bins. A law now prevents the production or sale of lab-grown meat in Florida.

On the positive side, the budget contains \$450 million for endangered land and wildlife corridors. A bill passed that regulated water quality caused by flooding due to sea level rise, as well as one that updates stormwater rules and fertilizer controls in primarily urban counties. Another bill passed that requires flood zone disclosures at the time of real estate sales, and whether there has been previous water damage from flooding. Some local bans on plastic trash were allowed to stand.

In closing, David made a plea for staying engaged in advocacy in Tallahassee, because sometimes it really works!

## CLUB EVENTS - Speakers' Corner For May, Lessons on Campaigning

By Kate Ellison

Pat McCollough is from Hawthorne, a Santa Fe College graduate in Graphic Design Technology, a graduate of UF in Education, a retired US Marine Corps Sergeant Major; she is certified in organizational leadership, and she is an ordained Minister. Retiring from the military and returning to her Florida roots, Pat has been very busy promoting the common good. Her work includes Statewide Coordinated Campaigns, Obama for America, Organizing for America, and many other state and local Democratic campaigns. Pat organized for the month-long sleep-in at the Florida State Capitol with the Dream Defenders, Trayvon Martin Stand Your Ground. She was the National Lead Marshal for The March on Washington 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

After all that, she attempted to retire. But Donna Deegan kept asking, and Pat couldn't keep saying no. Pat was the campaign manager who wrote the winning strategy and led a diverse team for Donna Deegan to become the first female Mayor in Jacksonville, and Pat became the first African-American Chief of Staff to the mayor there (because she couldn't keep saying no). Pat's current role is Assistant to the Mayor on Civic Engagement and Youth Participation. She is a member of numerous organizations nationally and in the Jacksonville area, including our beloved sister club, DWIN.

We were lucky to have her with us as our May speaker. She was happy to come to Melrose, where she spent part of her time growing up, plus her sister and a friend were able to attend the meeting and sneak in a quick visit. She was



smart, funny, and down to earth. Here is a bit of what she said:

Being in politics to win means building power. The basis of power comes from community engagement and community empowerment. Develop a plan and stick with it. It takes planning, skills, and people to have community engagement, and it is based on the issues and concerns of the people we have engaged. We begin by identifying goals, finding the tools (resources) we need, and recruiting volunteers. Importantly, we should include a regular evaluation of progress and make adjustments based on these evaluations. Communication is crucial, and we need a plan for that too. Social media, phone banking, door-knocking, all types of communication are included in the plan.

Pat noted that her contact list in her phone

*(continued on the next page)* Page 4

## CLUB EVENTS (Continued)

contains everybody who has volunteered with her along the years. Maintaining contacts is building capacity.

Community empowerment means recognizing we can't do it all by ourselves. We must empower each other by identifying what our gifts and talents are and employing these so that the work gets done. That means granting people power and authority within their own spheres. Our volunteers become leaders.

When effective, what we witness is active participation. That means we are including everyone, we are collaborating, and staying

focused (remember the plan). It means reaching out to gather the most inclusive group, then zooming in on tangible small tasks that can reasonably be accomplished.

We build capacity by starting small. Not small in numbers, because we are as inclusive as possible. Gather in small groups, focused on a task, and allow groups to grow naturally. Stay true to empowerment – actually let go and let each one to take the lead where their skills lie.

Don't wait for FDP to do this for us. We are the grassroots, and we are the effective local leaders.

## Upcoming Club Events

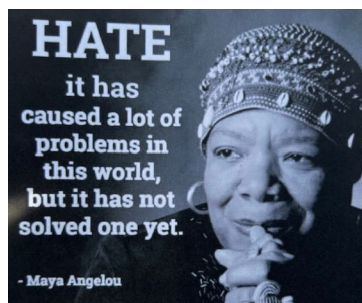
### Let's Dance!

The DWCLA Annual Fall Dance will be coming up on Saturday, Sept. 21, of this year at the Keystone Woman's Club in Keystone Heights. Your chance to put on your dancing shoes and show your stuff will be from 7:00-10:30 p.m. As usual there will be snacks, drinks and fun for all. So mark your calendars well ahead and look for our ads about ticket sales.



### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk Against Hate

The politics of the country and the world will certainly heat up and intensify over the coming months. The DWCLA 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk against hate on Sunday, October 20, of this year will be a particularly good time for everyone to step back (and out) for a reminder of the dangers and damage of hate. As in prior years, there will be speakers, discussion and conversation along with a short walk to include the community. Mark the date and look for updates ahead.



## SPOTLIGHT ON WOMEN IN LITERATURE AND HISTORY

### Women in Literature



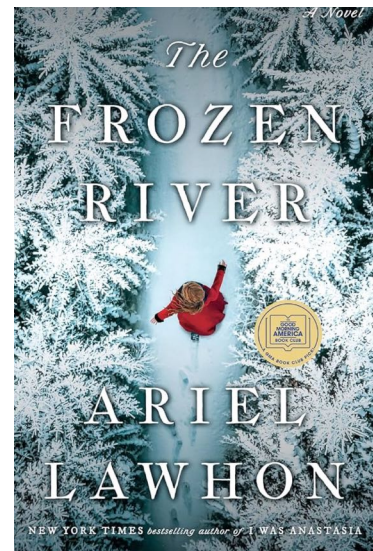
### The Frozen River

By Ariel Lawhon

Book Review by Sandy Stephenson

It is a good sign when a book pulls you in on the first page! In the historical fiction novel, *The Frozen River*, one of two men accused of raping a minister's wife is found frozen in the Kennebec River in colonial Maine. Was he murdered or did he accidentally fall in? Will justice prevail among rumors and controversy?

Author Ariel Lawhon was inspired by the true stories and diaries of midwife Martha Ballard of Hallowell, Maine. Martha is called in to determine the cause of death of the deceased and determines he was murdered. However, a town official calls in a recent Harvard graduate who states it was an accident. Martha feels forced to investigate on her own over the course of the winter while delivering babies and treating illnesses. As the trial approaches for the other accused man there are many side stories, rumors and prejudices that emerge. Martha's diaries and her testimony become evidence in several court proceedings. As the story emerges and we try to guess "who did it", we learn interesting facts about life in the 1700's. For example, a woman could only testify in court if her husband or father was present.



Women were also tried for fornication if they had a child out of wedlock and were jailed if they didn't name the father in court.

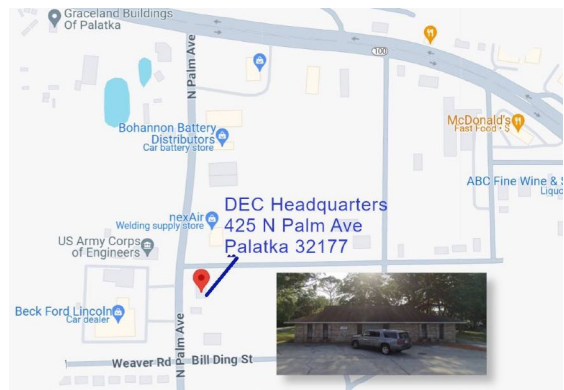
Entertaining, educating and thought provoking, *The Frozen River* is a great story that keeps you guessing, and we learn about a remarkable woman who was not known in history. She delivered over 1,000 infants and never lost a mother. Reading the author's notes at the end is a must to learn more about Martha.

Ariel Lawhorn's other historical novels include *Code Name Helene*, *I Was Anastasia*, *When We Had Wings*, *Flight of Dreams*, and *The Wife, the Maid, and the Mistress*

# DWCLA NEWSLETTER

## Putnam County Democrats Open Storefront

The Putnam County Democratic Club has opened a storefront! It will be campaign headquarters and aid in the purchase and distribution of campaign materials. The address 425 N. Palm Ave., Palatka, Fl. 32177. The store is open Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Our club voted for a donation to support this effort, so take some time to go and visit and become active in the campaign!



## The Last Laugh



### DONATE TODAY

Your recurring donation of even \$5 or \$10 a month will help! In order to work in the community to energize democratic women, WE NEED YOU! Your donation will be used to help our grassroots outreach in the lake area counties. We write post cards, do door to door canvassing, phone bank, and more to reach voters in our counties. Go Online to the website or to [Act Blue](#), directly.

