



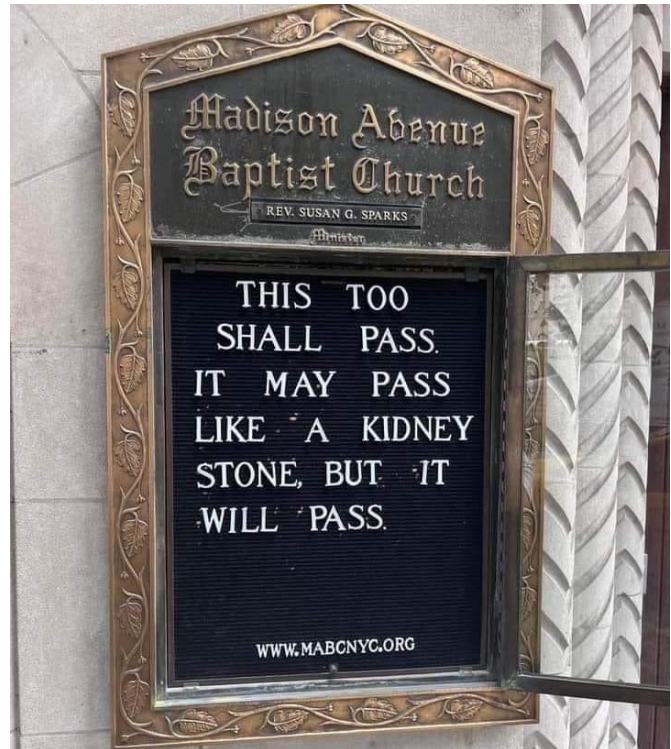
2024 Election Results: Crisis and Opportunity

By Michael and Terry Wells

The elections are now over, with Donald Trump and the MAGA Republicans moving into power again. As will be discussed in several articles in this issue of the Newsletter, there is good reason for trepidation. Judging from the prior Trump administration, we can again expect an increased level of political chaos and crises ahead. This may well include our own political and economic stability as well as threats to the alliances with our global partners.

Still, along with the potential disorder, as the Chinese proverb suggests, “a crisis is an opportunity riding a dangerous wind”. The opportunity riding this dangerous wind is that the very people who elected the MAGA Republicans are the most likely to be those harmed by many of the government reform and economic proposals being forwarded by Trump.

Typically, the party in power will lose political ground in midterm elections, usually related to unkept promises or the perception thereof. If there is enough discontent among Trump supporters along with the rest of the electorate, one or both houses of Congress could flip to Democratic control in the next elections. The challenge in realizing this opportunity will be to ensure that the Trump administration is held accountable for their likely failures. With Trump and the MAGA Republicans already notable for blaming anyone and everyone else for their failures, this may not be a simple task. As always, our best course of action is to continue to speak out and engage in our government at all levels as we move ahead.



Legislative Liaisons for Better State Government

By Rissi Cherie

The State Legislature 2025 session begins March 4 and lasts 60 calendar days. The Republicans hold a supermajority in both houses, which makes it difficult for our Democratic representatives to be heard. They need our strong and dedicated support. For the past 3 years, I have been the club’s lone Legislative Liaison. I invite you to join me in this fascinating 8 or 9 week look at how our state government works.

Every Tuesday night during the session there is a Zoom meeting hosted by state club members with specific skills and knowledge to parse the bills.

(continued next page)

Legislative Liaisons for Better State Government -Cont.

They share that info with the Liaisons during the Zoom. We, in turn, send Take Action emails advising members to contact the legislators telling them how we want them to vote on a bill. A sizable response in a representative's or senator's email and VM can make a huge difference. Anyone can be a Legislative Liaison. With two to four Legislative Liaisons watching the Zoom meetings and sending out the Action Alerts, we can make a difference. Remember, Florida is the beta state for Project 2025. We can't sit back and wait for whatever happens. **The Revolution is now.**



CLUB EVENTS

Dance the Night Away

The DWCLA annual dance was held on Sept. 21 at the Keystone Heights Woman's Club to the music of the rock band Crooked Counsel. Party goers enjoyed dance, drink and community as part of our Club's annual fundraiser. This year's event was especially well attended by Club members and the community. Special thanks again to Sharon Deitz who chaired the Dance Committee, and the Committee Members for another successful fund-raising event. Additional kudos to all Club members who assisted in the set up for the dance and the cleanup afterwards.

The fall dance is one of our big fundraising efforts for the year. Club members are always needed as fundraising volunteers including leadership roles such as Chair of the Fundraising Committee. So please consider volunteering, and above all, keep those shoes well oiled for next year!



Lots of Music and Dancing...



Things even got a little wild...

CLUB EVENTS- Cont.

Showing our true colors

By Kate Ellison

Every election year DWCLA takes to the streets! Well, sidewalks anyway. On the public sidewalks of Melrose we show up and show out, supporting our Democratic candidates and issues like Amendment 2. Does this sway any votes? Probably not. But it lifts our spirits and builds community. Occasionally people who are driving home will stop and talk, score a Harris/Walz sign, or rave about how refreshing it is to actually see other Democrats in our area! A lot of



the drivers gave us the finger, but plenty of others honked their horns in support too. We were there, near the stoplight, every Friday evening for 5 weeks before the election.

Fourth Annual Walk Against Hate

By Kate Ellison

Once again, we found it necessary to speak out against hate. We held the Fourth Annual Walk Against Hate in Melrose on October 20, 2024. President Cheryl Owen says “we need to highlight the honest teaching of our racial history, recognizing that marginalized communities still need DEI policies in order to move our state and our country toward a more just and equitable place for everyone.”

Linda E. Maurice, the Executive Director of the Jewish Council of North Central Florida began with a message of unity, understanding the humanity of all sides of the conflict raging in the Middle East, and consequently on our own soil. Attendees heard from three candidates who appeared on their November ballot, including Rev. James Stockton, candidate for US House District 6; George T Hill, candidate for FL Senate District 7 and Lashonda Holloway, candidate for US House District 4. Holloway had a morning



Speakers- (left to right) Cheryl Owen, Linda E. Maurice, James Stockton, George T. Hill, LaShonda Holloway

campaign stop, so Phillip Minor was filling in for her when she arrived.

After the rally, most of us formed essentially a picket line along the sidewalk, passing each other along the way. It was a beautiful, breezy day to show our solidarity and raise awareness.

DWCLA NEWSLETTER

CLUB EVENTS- Cont.



Christmas On Parade

The Dec.14, 2024 Melrose Christmas parade was sponsored by the Melrose Business and Community Association with a theme of “ A Storybook Christmas”. Our float in the parade this year was themed “We ♥ Our Library”. It included representations of the covers of books, some of which have been banned in the state of Florida, and live parents reading to a child. The float was preceded by Club President, Cheryl Owen, in a vintage car. Float riders included Terry and Michael Wells, and expert hand waver, 6- year -old Marilla Linley. Members passed candy out to children along the route. A special candy cane to Linda Osborne as Chairperson for the Parade Committee, and everyone who volunteered to help to bring the float together and participate in the parade.



SHENEMAN THE STAR-LEDGER



“ACTUALLY, I PAY THE TARIFF, NOT THE EXPORTING COUNTRY. I'M NOT GONNA EAT THAT COST, SO I PASS IT ON TO YOU, THE CONSUMER. LONG STORY SHORT, YOU OWE ME \$300.”

CLUB EVENTS



Speaker's Corner



Election Season in Melrose

By Kate Ellison

September: Jane Arrowsmith Edwards

Eight generations of Jane's family have lived in Florida. She taught for 20 years and now edits and writes plays and fiction in Gainesville. She's a rockhound who loves the springs, kayaks the gulf, and campaigns to protect Florida. In the 1980s she organized a rally with keynote speakers Marjorie Stoneman Douglas and Sen. Claude Pepper. She came to our September meeting to talk about Amendment 2 on our November ballots. Here are some excerpts from her speech.

"This Trojan horse called Amendment 2 uses heartwarming folkys and vague words: to fish and hunt 'by traditional methods' and 'by preferred means.' However, 'traditional and preferred' may include regressive, outlawed methods, such as gill nets, spears, poisons, clubs and metal traps. All became illegal with good reason: they are inhumane and/or indiscriminate." Floridians already have a right to fish and hunt. This amendment legalizes barbaric, painful methods of killing animals. It allows for fish nets that scoop up unintended, possibly endangered species.

"The vast schools of grouper, redfish and snapper that once swam our coastline are no more. It's estimated that grouper and snapper



have been overfished by 85%. Florida statute forbids gill nets, called 'walls of death,' that capture manatees, turtles, dolphins and sharks instead of the targeted fish. When nets are abandoned or torn loose by storms, they snag and doom marine life for years. Regulation is vital.

"Nevertheless, the amendment, [originally written by the NRA,] seeks to 'establish traditional methods [of hunting and fishing] as a public right and preferred means of responsibly managing and controlling fish and wildlife,' even though nonlethal methods of wildlife management have proven highly effective. This wording is used for no other right in our constitution, including our

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CLUB EVENTS

Speaker's Corner Cont. -Jane Arrowsmith Edwards

fundamental rights — and including the right to protect our private property from armed hunters.” Lawsuits will invariably ensue, but the right to protect our own property from hunting is in jeopardy with this proposal.

“Amendment 2 is a wolf in sheepskin intended to disarm the protections put in place decades ago. It stokes the red-white-and-blue sentiments of beloved traditions and God-given rights to the great outdoors. But rolling

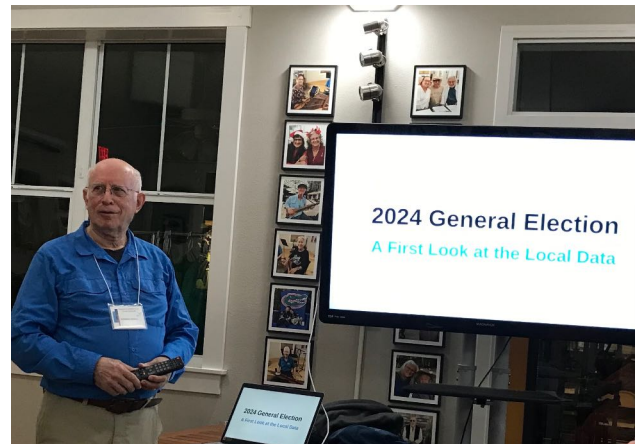
back protections of our wildlife could destroy our ‘public right’ to enjoy Florida's gifts. Our rights to hunt, fish and protect our property will remain secure” and relatively humane “only if we reject Amendment 2!” Jane told us. Clearly, the rest of the public was not listening. Amendment 2 passed easily on November 5, and Florida environmentalists and animal rights advocates are dreading the results of this vote.



November: Richard Segall stares our defeat in the face

The election was a bitter pill, and Democrats are still reeling, especially here in North Central Florida where we are so outnumbered. The Cities of Gainesville and Palatka are bright (blue) exceptions to the sea of dark red we swim through daily. Our November meeting was shortly after the election, and Richard Segall parsed the local results for us, looking at the outcome in the precincts that comprise our Lakes Area. The election had not been certified by then, so his data was the unofficial results. His PowerPoint was emailed to all our members after the talk.

Our high turnout did not help us. As with the rest of the state, the MAGA Republicans swept most of the offices, statewide and local (except in Gainesville). The Harris Walz ticket got between 12 and 34% of the vote in our precincts (22% overall). Although it varies by precinct, registered Democrats are about 20% of the electorate. Even when combined with all



other parties and no party, we add up to only 40%. The GOP's 60% of the vote means they will almost always win.

Their primaries are often more contested and livelier, with the election outcome frequently decided in those primaries. That encourages some Democrats to register Republican just so they have a voice in who gets elected, further weakening our party.

“The objective of the organization [National Federation of Democratic Women, of which we are a part] is to unite women of the

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DWCLA NEWSLETTER

Club Events -Speaker's Corner -Cont. - Richard Segall

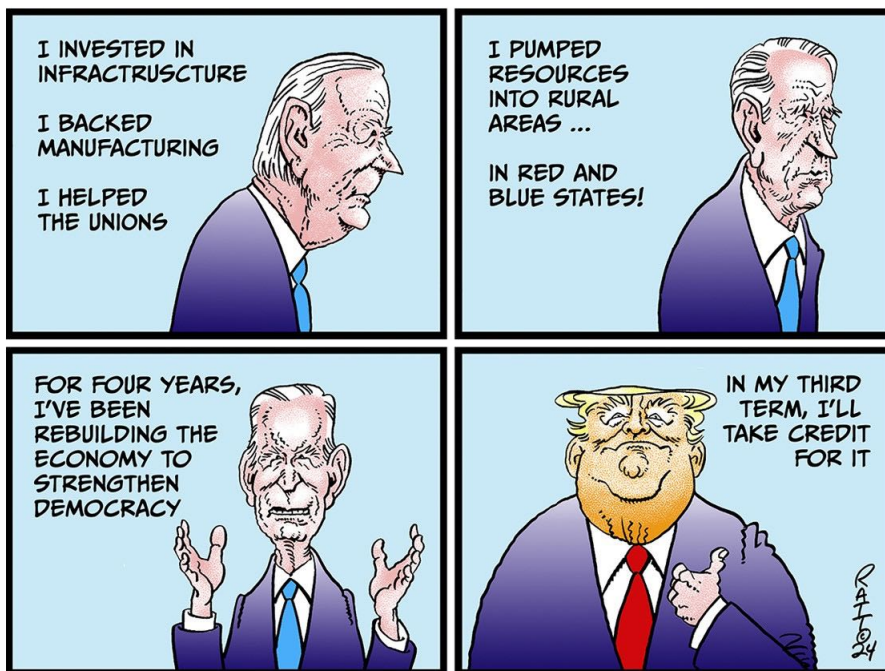


Democratic Party; to promote the cause of the Democratic Party and to encourage full participation of women in every level of the Democratic Party Structure." We intend to "raise the visibility and viability of the Democratic Party and turnout voters for Democratic candidates and issues." How are we addressing this?

GOTV alone is not a winning strategy if we are so outnumbered; we just don't have the votes. Voter protection saves votes we already have; it does not add to our vote count. The GOP was in control of redistricting, and ensured their dominance through 2030. Democrats' messaging relied too heavily on support for Amendment 4, which lost mightily in our precincts, and on the fear of fascism. We don't have a solid ground game in

between elections, and we have not effectively countered how MAGA has defined us.

What was missing? It is the answer to the question, why are you voting Dem? We need a real message, tailored to our area, we need a better ground game, reaching people who are willing to talk. We need to be talking about local issues relevant to our population and show how our values and policies address them. For example, there is no maternity room in Bradford or Putnam County hospitals (Bradford only has an ER). Why are there so many homeless and hungry? Republican policies, that's why. Basically, we need to be talking with more people, reaching outside our groups.





SPOTLIGHT ON WOMEN IN LITERATURE AND HISTORY

Women in Literature



The Chelsea Girls

By Fiona Davis

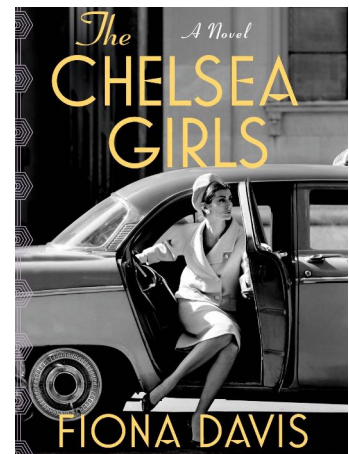
Book Review by Sandy Stephenson

Growing up in the 1950's was not the idyllic decade one remembers. This is evidenced once more in the historical novel *The Chelsea Girls* by Fiona Davis. Most of the story is set in the theatre district of New York City in the 50's and offers insight into the entertainment industry struggling under the threat of the McCarthy Era.

The book is divided into acts rather than chapters and begins when the main characters Hazel and Maxine meet as USO entertainers in Italy during world War II. Both women have strong personalities and some vulnerabilities as we follow their twenty-year relationship. After the war they reconnect at the iconic Chelsea Hotel. Hazel is now a struggling first-time playwright, and Maxine is an up and coming actress.

Hazel's play is based on their experiences with the soldiers in Italy. In June 1950, as the play moves forward, the actors, actresses, costume designers, and set builders become aware of pamphlets being circulated with over 150 names of communist sympathizers. The residents of The Chelsea are also under surveillance.

Hazel's name is on a list because she attended a pre-war rally with her brother. She is fearful her play will be shut down even before it starts and feels responsible for all of the



Fiona Davis

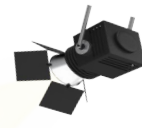
performers and employees under her. As she works to get "off the list", the costume designer is removed from the theatre by the FBI and they don't hear from him for months. There are questionable characters lurking throughout the story.

The portrayal of this destructive period of history is intertwined within the characters' lives, allowing us to feel the paranoia and hysteria as they struggle to make the "show go on". Twists and turns in the story make you wonder "who's next?"

The final element to the story is the Chelsea Hotel itself which still exists today. The quirky, artistic personalities who live there provide amusing interludes. Fiona Davis is known for her New York stories. Her historical fiction novels are set in New York landmarks such as the Barbizon Hotel, the Public Library and Grand Central Terminal.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT **Linda Osborne!



Are YOU ready to be known?*

By Leslie Skeans

She was born Linda Lou Osborne in Pennington Gap, Virginia in 1945. After graduating from The University of Tennessee Linda moved to Gainesville Florida in 1972. She worked at Bucholz High School from 1972 – 76 first as a paraprofessional then teacher. In 1976 Linda took a 2 year leave of absence from Alachua County Schools to work for the Florida Department of Education where she canvassed 20 school districts in North Florida to determine the feasibility of implementing the Florida Migrant Education Program. In 1978 Linda returned to teaching at Shell Elementary in Hawthorne, for 11 years. In 1989 Linda moved to the Florida Department of Education where she worked in the Title 1/Migrant Education Program satellite office in Gainesville serving as the District Migrant Education Coordinator for Putnam County until retiring in 2016. From 2016-18 Linda continued as a consultant for the Migrant Education and Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Programs.

In 2018 Linda ran (unsuccessfully) for a seat on the Putnam County District 4 School Board. *(editors note: Putnam county's loss)*

It was during her campaigning she met Fran Rossano who invited Linda to speak at a DWCLA meeting. There she met Richard Segall, Pam Perry and Alan Clayton. Because of the clubs like minded goals, she joined to help do her part in local, state and national elections.



***Come on, you have to have a personal life?**

Linda has a son, Eric Nelson and his wife Shawna who live in Easley South Carolina. Her grandchildren Kenley and Carter live in Nashville. Linda lives in Melrose in a house she built along with her father and mother. She gives all her DIY knowledge and credit to her dad. She has also built a deck, cat condo, green house and barn. Is it any wonder she is the Queen of Parade Float building?

(OH, BTW the cat condo is for her 7, formerly feral, cats who she has domesticated via a trap, neuter and release effort) *(editors note: I am seriously starting to reconsider my entire life)*

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DWCLA NEWSLETTER

Cont. - Member Spotlight- Linda Osborne

****Bragging rights?***

1998 & 2001 - Florida Migrant Program Educator of the Year

2004 - Florida Non-Teaching Professional - National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education

2012 - Ohtil Award - Mexico's Secretary of Education for Services to Mexican/Mexican Americans Living Abroad

****Member of...in your spare time?***

Board member at large for DWCLA
Chairperson Putnam County Zoning Board of Adjustment
Board of Directors First Coast Credit Union

Vice President Melrose Business and Community Association

****But to really know you...****

What is the best sandwich? Turkey Bacon Club

What is the scariest animal? Reptile: Rattlesnake

What is the best smell? Cinnamon and finally; *Apples or Oranges?* Oranges.

Linda Lou Osborne now, you are officially known.

With appreciation to the Stephen Colbert Questionnaire.

Editorial Opinion- 2025 - How Bad Will It Be?

By Scott Alexander, Melrose, Florida

Like many of you, I am approaching the new year with dread. I keep wondering, how bad is it going to be? From all indications, it is going to be a dreadful year for us Democrats and the rest of America beginning the moment that Donald Trump is sworn in as President on January 20th.

I guess that Trump plans to set up an authoritarian oligarchy like Putin's Russia. Bernie Sanders agrees. He recently said, "We are moving rapidly into an oligarchic form of society. Never before in American history have so few billionaires, so few people, had so much wealth and so much power."

The billionaires are lining up at the federal troughs waiting to engorge themselves on taxpayer dollars and curry favor with the narcissistic Trump.

Donald Trump has promised to pardon the January 6th insurrectionists in the first hour of his



presidency. His cabinet picks are all stooges and idiots and they are a tool to be used, first to test the loyalty of the Republican-controlled House and Senate and then to dismantle the agencies that safeguard the American public.

He has promised mass deportations of illegal aliens, family separations, the end of birth-right citizenship, deportation of the dreamers,

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Editorial Opinion- Cont. 2025 - How Bad Will It Be?

suspending refugee resettlements and revoking the temporary status of Haitian refugees. Horrific.

On the economic front, he wants to add a 10% to 20% tariff to all non-domestic goods sold in America and a 60% tariff on goods from China. He proposes banning U.S. companies from investing in Chinese companies, banning Chinese companies from investing in U.S. companies, and adopting a four-year plan to phase out Chinese imports. (Meanwhile, many of his MAGA products are made in China.)

With the money he thinks he will gain from these tariffs, he says he can provide a "middle class, upper class, lower class, business class, and a big tax cut." He also wants to end the taxation of Social Security, tips, and overtime pay and reduce the taxation of Americans living overseas.

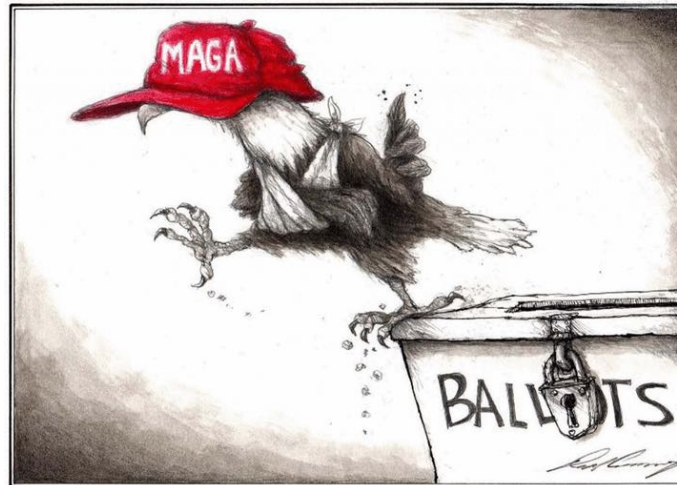
He wants to reduce the corporate tax rate from 21% to 15% "for companies that make their products in America" and cap credit card interest rates and car insurance rates.

Trump's economic promises don't make a lot of sense taken together and are sure to cause chaos and lower the standard of living for all but the richest Americans.

President-elect Trump vows to seek revenge against many of his political opponents, judges, prosecutors, and bureaucrats who have stood in his way over the years and to deport peaceful protesters.

Trump has threatened many of his adversaries, from saying special counsel Jack Smith should be arrested to suggesting those involved with the January 6th committee could be prosecuted. He said former Rep. Liz Cheney, the panel's vice chair, "should go to jail" and face guns pointed at her face. Trump has also called other Democrats the

CUMMINGS, Winnipeg, CANADA



"enemies from within" while also targeting Republicans who have criticized him.

These are the words and deeds of a want-to-be dictator and tyrant. It is tempting to throw up our hands and say it is out of my control, but this is what tyrants depend upon. They want us to feel hopeless and powerless. So, our task for the years ahead is to figure out what we will do about it. There are no easy answers to this question, but a place to start is to work to regain control of the House of Representatives where the Republicans only lead by a five-seat margin.

The glimmer of hope we have for the new year is Donald Trump is incompetent and scatterbrained. His cabinet picks seem similarly ill-equipped. Trump promised to do many things in his first term that never happened, such as building a wall on the southern border and locking up Hillary Clinton. Will things be different this time now that all four branches of the federal government are under Republican control? Time will tell.

Editorial Opinion- The Abominable Failure of Amendment 4 to Pass in the 2024 Election

By Rissi Cherie

Why were Florida women once again left without the right to control their own bodies? Three big red reasons. Florida requires a supermajority of 60% to pass voter-led changes to the constitution. The amendment got 57%. More than 6 million voters voted to pass the amendment to protect women's rights to reproductive healthcare. That's two million more votes than DeSantis got to be elected governor. As they say, "Flori-DUH."

DeSantis is a large part of the reason the amendment didn't pass. He had his team write TV ads calling for a no vote and making the amendment appear to say, among other untruths, an abortion would be possible at 9 months! Those ads were paid for by our taxes.

The Florida Republican party also threw huge amounts of money into ads and fliers filled with lies and distortions about the amendment, plus Vote NO on 4 yard signs. Their voters, who outnumber registered Florida Democrats, said yes sir, yes sir, three bags full. If only Democrats had such unity. Sorry, I digress.

"This is a heartbreaking loss," Nikki Fried said in a

statement. "Republicans treated this like a political game – but women will die because of their efforts to end access to reproductive healthcare in the South. Many doctors will lose their licenses, face lawsuits, or flee the state entirely, affecting access to quality care for all Floridians."

We know this is heartbreaking.

Two actions Democrats can take to change this outcome are not easy and will take time. One is to reach out to young women of childbearing age with information about what the strict 6-week rule and the lack of obstetricians and maternity hospital services will mean to them personally so they are inspired to make a lot of noise to their representatives on a weekly basis and make a lot of good trouble that will raise awareness among their peers. The second action falls on all other Democrats. We must also make good, loud trouble and write letters to the editor and to our representatives, respond to any news or other pronouncement that banning abortions is good, and keep the faith that we can make changes in our government.



SHENEMAN THE STAR-LEDGER

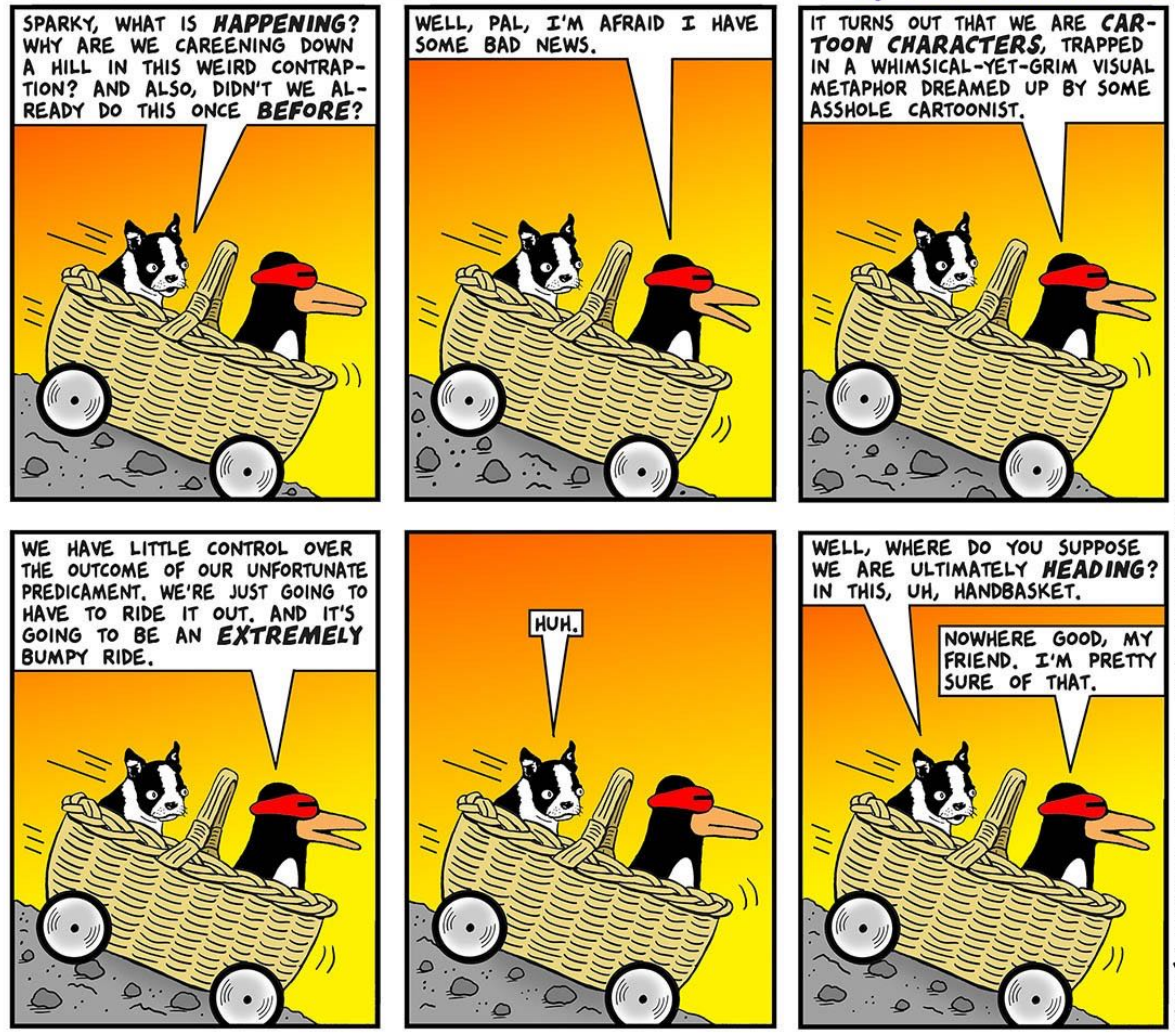


"SORRY ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS, BUT GROCERIES ARE REALLY EXPENSIVE RIGHT NOW."

The Last Laugh

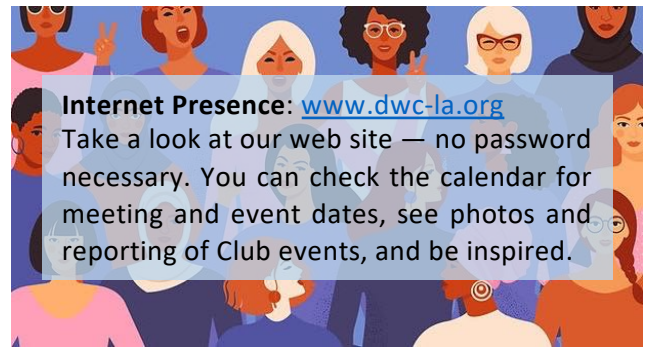
THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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.



Internet Presence: www.dwc-la.org
Take a look at our web site — no password necessary. You can check the calendar for meeting and event dates, see photos and reporting of Club events, and be inspired.