



Newsletter of the Republican Party of Palm Beach County—January 2019

A New Day in Tallahassee

Comments by Peter Feaman

Republican National Committeeman, Florida

**FROM THE BACKHOE CHRONICLES—FLORIDA
INAUGURATION EDITION**

The majesty, pomp and circumstance of a peaceful transfer of power is a wondrous event, and the inauguration of Ron DeSantis as Florida’s 46th Governor was no exception.

First was the seating of Florida’s previous Lt. Governors and Governors who chose to attend. Escorted to their seats on the stage: Lt. Govs. Jennifer Carrol and Jeff Kottcamp.

Then former Governors, one by one: Bob Graham, Bob Martinez, Jeb Bush (warmly received with a round of applause), (Charlie Crist was absent) and lastly, outgoing Governor Rick Scott, accompanied by his lovely wife.

The Florida Supreme Court came next with the retiring justices notably absent.

One by one the newly-elected cabinet officers were escorted to their seats with guests and select family members in tow: Nikki Fried, Jimmy Patronis, Ashley Moody, Jeannette Nunez and then Ron DeSantis.

After the presentation of the colors, the invocation and the Star-Spangled Banner, a musical interlude followed with patriotic songs by John Phillip Sousa and even the Battle Hymn of the Republic.

Each Cabinet officer was sworn in.

After the swearing in of Mr. DeSantis, we were treated to a 22-cannon salute and a flyover by a quartet of F-18s! Now Governor DeSantis began his address:

I take the helm of the ship of state as a Florida native, a veteran of our nation’s military, conscious of my own deficiencies, mindful of the great trust that has been placed in me and thankful for so many of you who have prayed for me.

Being charged with leading a state with so much promise, all I can promise is the sweat off my brow, a full heart, my best judgment and the courage of my convictions.

I will not be a rudderless vessel in this endeavor; my compass will be the principles reflected in the constitutional oath I have just taken, and for which Americans have given their lives: that our rights are endowed by God, not government; that we the people loan power to government under the Constitution in order to protect our rights; that government’s role is not to run our lives for us but to provide what Lincoln called an “open

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Ron DeSantis being sworn in as Florida’s new Governor.



Gov. Rick Scott and Ann Scott arriving at the ceremonies.

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field and fair chance for one’s industry, enterprise and intelligence. . . .

His 20-minute speech concluded with this:

At the Constitutional Convention of 1787, Benjamin Franklin was asked to be the first to sign the new Constitution. It was a tumultuous convention; it seemed like a miracle that it had succeeded.

Franklin pointed to the chair at the front of the chamber from which General George Washington had presided over the convention. The chair featured a sun that sat low on the horizon.

Franklin remarked, “I have often . . . in the course of the session . . . looked at the sun behind the President with-

out being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun.

Our new Governor continued:

If we meet the challenges that lie before us; if we overcome the tribalism that has dominated our politics; if we set the interests of hard-working taxpayers as our true north, then I have no doubt that the state of Florida will cruise to bright new horizons.

We will see that rising sun.

So Sail on, O’ Ship of State, For the future of Florida is strong and great.

God bless you, and may God bless the great state of Florida. Thank you.

I believe the voters of the great state of Florida have chosen wisely. Well done, Governor DeSantis, take the helm.



Jeanette Nuñez being sworn in as Florida’s Lt. Governor.



Ashley Moody being sworn in as Florida’s Attorney General.



Jimmy Patronis being sworn in as Florida’s CFO.



Casey and Ron DeSantis at the Inaugural Ball.



Sally and Peter Feaman enjoying the festivities.

Calizuela

By Sid Dinerstein
December 27, 2018

Not so long ago America was “California Dreaming,” thanks to the Mamas and the Papas. Today, not so much. As everyone knows, California is a giant-sized very far left state with the country’s largest population, close to 40 million, legal and illegal. Housing prices are sky high. Traffic is a bear. Taxes are the highest in the nation, with the state income tax topping off at 13 percent. Their public schools are considered worst in the nation and, excluding new immigrants, more people are moving out than moving in. Illegals are given special status, protections from federal authorities seeking to remand alleged law breakers. And the Californians love it. This November they voted themselves super-majority Democratic control of both legislative houses. They used “Ballot Harvesting” to complete this election tsunami—a tactic that looks like voter fraud, but is in fact legal in California (and Florida and other states). Have I mentioned the unfunded pension liabilities of an estimated \$600 billion (with independent estimates of as high as one trillion dollars) owed to state employees (including \$200,000 per year life guards)? And my special favorite, the “Trainboggle,” California’s \$77 billion “train to nowhere.” And these new Democratic legislators, what’s topping their agenda? Expansion—of everything. Yes, gun taxes, free preschool, free community colleges, single payer health care and Medicaid for illegals; all are on their agenda and they haven’t even been sworn in yet. (They tried texting taxes but the Feds just said no.)

What are freedom loving, common sense, personally responsible Californians supposed to do? The answer: Read a book. If you’re reading my columns, somewhere along the way you probably encountered author/philosopher Ayn Rand. In 1957 she published her seminal treatise, *Atlas Shrugged*, an 1100-page (small print, no pictures) philosophical tract packed inside a novel. The original working title of the book was “The Strike.” It’s about Capitalists trapped inside a future increasingly Socialistic America. Their solution. Drop out. Create your own society in the mountains of Colorado, a place called Galt’s Gulch, and let the less productive fend for themselves. In the America of *Atlas Shrugged*, success is punished, crime is not. Government bureaucrats are chiefs. Captains of industry are order takers. You get the idea. Ayn Rand also wrote a powerful (short) essay entitled “The Sanction of the Victim.” Here she makes the case that nobody has to remain a victim. Everyone has choices. Just ask the three million Venezuelans who recently walked into Columbia. (Although I’m not so sure about those trapped in Cuba, an island prison surrounded by a 90-mile wide moat.) How does *Atlas Shrugged* inform the California dilemma? Read on.

The Oakland Raiders professional football team is the canary in the coal mine. In 2020 they’ll be the Vegas (baby) Raiders, taking their \$177 million annual payroll to a state

without an income tax (and depriving California of over \$20 million per year in those taxes). It’s time to get organized. I read about possible petition drives to stop the Trainboggle and attempts to revitalize the California Republican Party and I say: “NO Mas! Let’s do something productive. Let’s start an “Overground Railroad.” After all, the pre Civil War “Underground Railroad” was run by Abolitionists (who formed the Republican Party in 1854) to free the slaves from the clutches of the Democrats. Thankfully, Republicans ended real slavery through the Civil War. But the “Overground Railway” needs to be a coordinated effort by Republican Parties and affiliated groups (Tea Parties, NRA, Evangelicals). This organization would seek out individuals, for-profit and non-profit organizations grounded in Constitutional values (California tax slaves), and match them with “recruiters” from Florida, Texas and Nevada—states with high temperatures and low taxes. The groundwork has been laid by Florida’s Governor (soon to be Senator) Scott and Texas Governor Abbot. Ramp it up. Make California the target. Make California Venezuela. And double-track the “Overground Railway.” In other words, as California increases its public benefits for illegals, do a national advertising campaign to help all illegals find their way there. Hard-working freedom-loving people go to income tax free states. Law-breaking illegals mass in California. Voila! Calizuela is born.

If you think this essay is tongue in cheek then you don’t know me. The systemic destruction of core American values is not to be taken lightly. The government created drought (by diverting rivers) and the government assisted wild fires (by refraining from common sense forest management techniques) are the early signs of a society that discounts markets and elevates unlimited government.

Calizuela here you come!



Sid Dinerstein served as Chairman of the Republican Party of Palm Beach County from 2002 to 2012. A leader with a passion for Republican politics, Sid leads by example, motivating teams and uniting diverse groups to achieve a common goal. With a passion for promoting charter schools, Sid was honored by Inlet Grove Community Charter High School earlier this year as “Charter School Advocate.” He authored Adults Only: For Those Who Love Their Country More Than Their Party in 2007, a book that was a finalist for the 2009 Next Generation Indie Book Awards. Sid has been married to Esther since 1967, and they have two daughters, two sons-in-law and two granddaughters.

Shutdown Showdown Lowdown

By Tom Mullings

Here's some lowdown on the shutdown showdown between President Trump and the Democrats. To begin with, our friends on the other side of the aisle claim that this is a "manufactured crisis," foisted on the nation for purely political reasons by the President. So let's examine this situation and see who's really playing politics. First, some ancient history about the ongoing ILLEGAL immigration problem that the Dems are confident we've all long since forgotten.

Back in the 1980s during the Reagan administration, there were approximate 3 million ILLEGAL aliens in the country, and naïve Republicans brokered a deal with the Dems, in which the GOP agreed to create a path for citizenship for those 3 million in exchange for a promise to "secure the border" in the near future. Predictably, the "secure the border" part of that bipartisan agreement never was fulfilled and here we are over 30 years later facing the same problem, with the exception that there are now 12–16 million ILLEGALS in the country instead of 3 million to deal with. And President Trump is the one playing politics with this issue?! *Au contraire, mon père*, I beg to differ.

Speaking of politics, there is one thing missing from the debate about our southern border that neither side seems to want to talk about, the Dems for understandable reasons. The Republicans don't want to speak publicly about this either, but this one does, so here goes: Most of the people who come across our southern border and participate in our elections, vote for Democrats. More than anything else, that fact explains the donkeys' eagerness for sanctuary cities, states, and open borders, and their disdain for things like e-verify, border barriers and other forms of technology that would, without a doubt, reduce the ILLEGAL infiltration across our southern border to a trickle.

Last Tuesday night, during a prime-time speech, President Trump, using his unique bully pulpit, did an end run around the squabbling pachyderms and donkeys up on the Hill, and

took his case for border security directly to the American people. He is considering declaring a national emergency and using the U.S. military to build the wall, in order to out-flank Dems, who are so opposed to giving him a victory in anything he wants to do that if it was learned today that \$5 billion would keep the sun shining for another 50 years, they would come out in full-throated opposition, claiming with unshakable certitude that fun in the sun is overrated.

An interesting proposal to get around the inherent long-term precedent-setting dangers of declaring a national emergency was offered by Bill Cassidy (R-LA), who wants to use the \$3–5 billion in the Asset Forfeiture Fund, accumulated every year by the Feds from drug convictions, to secure the border, but that would entail enlisting bi-partisan support for legislation in the House and Senate. Good luck with that one in the toxic, partisan-charged atmosphere in today's politics.

So where does that leave the President in terms of which course of action to choose? For one thing, he should not open the 25 percent of the federal government that is now closed until he gets what he wants in order to stop the flow of ILLEGAL aliens who are barging into our country uninvited, undermining our LEGAL immigration system, and bringing with them the scourge of illegal drugs, human sex trafficking, and God knows what else that creates so much misery. We can never completely eliminate this problem, but using modern technology, we can vastly reduce the exorbitant price we pay for this influx in national treasure and human lives if we want to. So take your case to the people, Mr. President, as you did so effectively last Tuesday night. You'll get another chance to do so before a huge national audience later this month during your State of the Union message, so stick to your guns and build support among our people, which is undoubtedly the best way in a democratic society to finally put this generation-long, national, problem on the road to solution.

Joe Gruters Elected RPOF Chair

At the quarterly RPOF meetings in Orlando this past weekend, Joe Gruters was elected Chair and Christian Ziegler was elected Vice Chair of the Republican Party of Florida. Joe, who is the Chair of the Sarasota County GOP and a state senator, was the co-chair of Florida's 2016 Trump campaign. On his election as RPOF Chair, Joe proclaimed, "This is now the party of Ron DeSantis." Many thanks to outgoing Chair Blaise Ingoglia and Vice Chair Michael Barnett for their leadership, and congratulations to Joe and Christian!



J'Accuse . . . !

By George Blumel

That title goes back to 1898 when Emile Zola wrote to the President of France accusing the government of anti-Semitism in the Dreyfus Affair. “I accuse” headlined many articles, letters, and movies since then when a citizen felt deeply that a government or individual acted unfairly causing great harm. “I accuse” came immediately to mind when I saw the news that Police Officer Ronil Singh was murdered by an illegal alien in a traffic stop.

Cpl. Singh left a wife and baby son—Fox News showed a picture of them together with his police dog by their Christmas tree taken hours before he was shot. The illegal alien *alleged* murderer was protected by the Democrat-Party-ruled Sanctuary State of California.

The Federation for Immigration Reform and Judicial Watch have identified 564 sanctuary jurisdictions that restrict cooperation with federal immigration authorities. Palm Beach County and West Palm Beach are on the list. The pro-sanctuary Democrat candidate for governor, Andrew Gillum, won Palm Beach County with 58% of the vote.

We remember Kate Steinle who was killed in 2015 by a five-time deported felon who was protected in an illegal immigrant sanctuary. AG Jeff Sessions sadly remarked, “San Francisco’s decision to protect criminal aliens led to the preventable and heartbreaking death of Kate Steinle.”

Another multiple deportee killed a woman sitting in a car, killed a man at a gas station and wounded several others in random shootings. He also robbed a convenience store, carjacked a truck, fired shots at his ex-girlfriend’s house, and then injured four people in wrong-way car crashes.

Killing Spree

In 2017 on the way back from Disneyland, Ingrid Lake’s car was struck by a drunk driver. The accident severely injured her 6-year-old son. The driver of the vehicle, Constantino Banda Acosta, was previously deported 15 times (!) before the accident.

Tessa Tranchant, 16, was killed in 2007 as she was sitting at a stoplight when Alfred Ramos, an illegal alien from Mexico, intoxicated and speeding, smashed into her car. Ramos



Cpl. Singh and his family hours before he was murdered.

had a history of prior convictions, but due to Virginia Beach’s sanctuary policies, he was never detained.

In 2015 Apolinar Altamirano, an illegal alien from Mexico, out on bond from a previous conviction, murdered Grant Ronnebeck as he was working his shift at a convenience store. “My son’s death was completely preventable. Obama’s immigration policies cost my son his life,” says Steve Ronnebeck



Examples like those are quite common in Democrat-protected illegal alien sanctuaries. The Democrat Party is complicit in the deaths where their policies prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from picking up and deporting the criminal illegals.

The frightening toll of illegal immigrant criminals

Democrats know that illegals are more likely to commit crimes than the rest of the population. Fox News sorted through “local, state and federal statistics” and found that “illegal immigrants are three times as likely to be convicted of murder as members of the general population, and account for far more crimes than their share of the U.S. population would suggest.” ICE estimates that there are more than 1.2 million criminal aliens at large in the U.S.

Sen. Schumer may not have publicly stated that implied quote in his picture, but it does encapsulate his Democrat Party’s motivation for supporting the influx of illegal aliens. In many states illegals can get a driver’s license and many—millions!—can vote with that ID, as well as other ways. (Maybe HillIARY didn’t win the popular *legal* vote?)



Now that the Schumer/Pelosi leadership has the Democrat Party opposing the President’s request for \$5 billion for “the wall,” causing a partial government shutdown, border security is on indefinite hold. It means that more illegals will continue to invade and the crimes and deaths of innocents will continue. The blood on Democrats’ hands is there for all to see.

George Blumel is a husband, father, grandfather; retired entrepreneur; blogger www.posterchildrenfortermlimits.com; political activist—for freedom with responsibility.

CONNECTED?

By William J. Skinner

Are you really connected to what is necessary for Republicans to win more local, state, and national races in Palm Beach County? If you think you are, then why do Republicans not win more often? What has happened in the last 15 years to cause the election of more non-Republicans? Perhaps more important, what are we going to do about this?

One thing is the growth of the “Other” category faster than the Democrat, but note that Republican Party gained more than the Democrat Party in the same period. The data in Table A below is from <https://www.pbcelections.org/Election.aspx?eid=27> cover page and Election Archive files.

Republicans are increasing in Palm Beach County, but Other Parties are growing faster. Why is that? Maybe because Republicans are not connecting with Others on a one-on-one level. Maybe voters are disgusted with President Obama’s left-wing, lead-from-behind, using-the-pen-and-telephone leadership. Maybe voters are disgusted with the number of elected Republicans pleading guilty of violating laws in these same 15 years as compared to Democrat office holders. Palm Beach County is known as “corruption county” to U.S. Attorneys and local prosecutors for a reason.

But are Republicans registering voters? Do Republicans have a plan to register voters? Do Republicans have a committee discussing a plan to register more voters?

I have never studied what the Democrat Party is doing; I only know what the local newspapers and web news tells me. But I took a few minutes to discover what the Democrats have on their website now at <https://www.pbcdemocraticparty.org/>.

The Democratic Party website claims its organization has over 380,000 registered Democrats (17,000 more listed in Table A). Of that number, over 500 are elected/ selected members of the Democrat Executive Committee (DEC), the governing body for the Palm Beach County Democrat Party. Their website claims “Each of the 800+ voting precincts in Palm Beach County is entitled to a male and female representative to the D.E.C., officially and legally titled Precinct Committeeman/woman, who represent their precinct and commit to organizing the precinct for the party. The #1 job of the DEC and Committeepersons is to Get Out The Vote.”

The Democrat Party claims 20 committees and gives the chairman or vice chair names, telephone number and e-mail address of each. Jurisdictional statements are made for each committee. The web claims “Much of the work of the Palm Beach County Democrat Party is accomplished through standing and special committees, each charged with specific responsibilities. The chairs and vice chairs of the standing and special committees along with the officers and other elected members of the Democrat Executive Committee are members of the DEC’s Advisory Committee. The Advisory Board functions as the DEC’s board of directors.”



The Democrats use Zones to organize their work. The website states, “For administrative and campaign coordination purposes, the Palm Beach Democrat Party divides the county into 15 geographic zones. Each zone is includes 20 to 50 precincts. The boundaries of each precinct are established by the Supervisor of Elections. For any election in which the members of the precinct are eligible to vote, the precinct’s voters are presented with an identical ballot— same candidates and same ballot questions. The Zone Leaders are responsible for recruiting precinct leaders and workers to help serve our most important mission of the Palm Beach Democrat Party: to get out the maximum vote for Democrat candidates, as well as those candidates endorsed by the DEC for offices elected on a nonpartisan basis.”

The Democrats use the “Democrat clubs to provide the mechanism for Democrats in the same geographic area to connect with one another. Our Democrat caucuses enable people with like interests to meet one another Palm Beach County has 26 Democrat clubs. Each club has its own meeting schedule (generally once a month) and is responsible for its own program of speakers, activities and events. Membership cost is nominal (\$10 to \$20 a year) and guests are welcome.

“Palm Beach County has six active Democrat caucuses. The Democrat Caucuses provide the mechanism for Democrats who want to organize around a particular issue

Connected?—continued on next page

TABLE A

	Republican	Democrat	Other	Total
1/1/2019	266,183	397,253	278,831	942,267
12/16/2004	174,882	337,846	174,882	752,384
Growth	91,301	59,407	103,949	189,883

Connected?—continued from previous page

or particular cause to get together. The caucuses welcome new members and volunteers. Each caucus sets its own meeting schedule.”

“Please contact the club or caucus president or vice president to learn more—and then join the members at a meeting.”

Noteworthy on a section on the Democrats’ web is a Report of its Education Committee which starts “Americans are currently living through one of the most challenging and trying times in the history of our relatively young country. We are experiencing a major assault on the foundations of our values, morals, ethics and, yes, the very laws that form the basis of our democracy. Of particular importance to us as educators is the negative impact evident in the actions of Betsy DeVos, Trump’s highly unqualified Secretary of Education who seeks to privatize education and undermine our long cherished system of public education.

“This White Paper (as well as the attached Summary) contains a toolbox of talking points for better understanding the current debate in public education over charter schools.”

By comparison, the Republican Executive Committee recently held its officer election with an attendance of 107 voting members. The PBC REC has some coalitions, but does not have regular meetings or advertise contacts for them. The PBC REC Board is less than 25 people who make most of the decisions. The PBC REC has no Zones or ground-up organization except what is organized in different ways before each election. I have not yet learned

about how the PBC REC is supporting Education Secretary DeVos in her battle.

The PBC REC does not appear to be making the same effort as the PBC DEC is making just by these few observations. It is painfully obvious that the REC needs to do more.

There are Republicans who would like to offer ideas and try to improve on the vote getting efforts by the Republican Party. They need to be welcomed and given opportunities to connect with other like-minded Republicans. Easy to say, but extremely difficult to do.

My review of Tom Kersting’s book, *Disconnected*, elsewhere in this newsletter is about screen telephones and other devices and our youth. Therefore, let me end with a quote from a telephone man who said: “If you’re gonna make connections which are innovative . . . you have to not have the same bag of experiences as everyone else does.” —Steve Jobs

Skinner is a retired attorney who practiced law in Maryland and D.C. He litigated redistricting in Maryland, represented a Governor candidate, ran for office three times, was elected president of the Maryland Taxpayers Association for four years, and led the Montgomery County Civic Federation for two years. He has been a national officer of the American Society for Pharmacy Law and held committee offices with the American Bar Association, Federal Bar Association and local bar associations. Since 2006 Skinner has organized Republicans to oppose voter fraud by reporting out-of-state voters who also vote in Florida.



@TheVGBlog
VictoryGirlsBlog.com

When Is a Caravan Not a Caravan? When It Is, at Best, a Horde; or Worse!!!

By Arthur DeRuve, Col. (Ret.), USAR

It was the Mayor of Tijuana who referred to the masses threatening to storm across our southern border as a horde. Was he branded a racist by the fascist left when he let the world know that he didn't want this gang in his city? Of course not. Why? Because his name is not Trump, and he is of the same race as those making the threats. To call him a racist would make the callers (crazy leftists) look stupid. They are, but they don't want to make it overly obvious. Further, 70 percent of the population of Tijuana is against this mob being in their city. Any yelling by the fascist left about the population of that city being racist? Of course not. Why not? Because they are of the same race as the intruders and, even more to the truth, because they are not all named Trump.

What's in a name? It matters not! Whatever it be called, it (they) have unspeakable nerve. To attack our border with threats of invading our country—and certainly it is an invasion—is incomprehensible. To say “we are coming into your country whether you like it or not” is beyond reasonable understanding. To attack our border law-enforcement officials with stones and bottles is barbarous. To put the women and children in front of the herd so as to absorb any retaliation from our country's protectors is cowardly. Yes, the young men, who make up the majority of this invasion force, are COWARDS! Why are they running away from the injustices they claim persecute them, and hiding behind the skirts and baby carriages of their women and children, instead of standing and fighting for what they want, as did some other magnificent young men in 1776?

As for those who speak in favor of open borders, for those who signal vulgar hand gestures against our country's defenders, one might ask, “why?” The answer is obvious—they are the left-wing fascists who see these cowards as future votes for the Democrat Party. They put their party before their country. They, when they tolerate what these cowards have the audacity to do, put their party before our (and their) chil-

dren, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Since these defenders of the insolence shown by these mobs claim to have compassion, they might think about having their homes open to share

with these rioters. Of course, they wouldn't have to think about it, as the invaders feel they have a right to such facilities whether the owners think so or not. Needless to say, gated communities would be done away with as part of their mentally deranged idea of open borders/open gates. Sick and dangerous ideas conceived by sick and dangerous minded left-wing fascists called Democrats.

The gall of such people, among whose ranks are human traffickers, murderers, felons, rapists, child molesters, drug smugglers et al., to thumb their noses at our magnificent country's citizens and laws. The insidious position taken by the fascist left of our political spectrum (Democrats) is little less than treacherous. The Democrat Party has moved so far to the left it risks falling off the end of the political world. Shame on those who comprise the so-called caravan. Shame on those who drag their children, whom they can't afford, and probably should not have given birth to, into this desperate and illegal activity. Shame on the cowards who use women and children as human shields from retaliation for the monstrous acts they commit. But far beyond any of these shames is the Shame of the Democrat Party for being complicit, for being responsible, directly or indirectly, for all the indignities and brutalities of this truly sick attack on our country—the best and freest in all the world! Shame, Shame, Shame on the Democrats!!



Talking Points:**Romney Off to a Bad Start***Nobody is really sure why he went off the rails, attacking Trump unprovoked***By Larry P. Horist**

Mitt Romney has proven himself to be a politician without any apparent principled anchorage. He floats on the sea of politics like the proverbial cork—chaotically steered by the ever-changing winds and waves. In brief, he is the quintessential elitist establishmentarian.

Romney's recent foray as editorialist for the *Washington Post* raises questions both as to his loyalty to the Republican Party and his savvy as a politician. Whatever his feelings about President Trump, it is difficult to understand why he would have chosen this moment to gratuitously attack the President—and in cahoots with one of the premier anti-Trump AND anti-Republican/anti-conservative news outlets in the country.

Of course, Romney has made himself the instant darling of the #NeverTrump Resistance Movement. The left-leaning press is now describing the former Massachusetts governor in the most heroic of terms. The same mavens of the media that are now canonizing the man are the very same that demonized him in his presidential campaign against Barack Obama. But for now, he is the man-of-the-moment for the elitist press—the useful . . . well . . . you know.

He did gain momentary favor with the elitist East Coast media cabal when he verbalized his contempt for Trump during the presidential campaign. That could be forgiven since most Republicans opposed Trump's nomination (this writer included)—a nomination he secured with a plurality of the vote in those early primaries largely due to the anti-Trump vote being divided among so many candidates. (That dynamic should cause some concern for Democrats, who are going into 2020 with more potential candidates than sopranos in the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.)

The same Mitt Romney who vilified Trump in the campaign was seen sucking up to the President over dinner when the position of Secretary of State was dangled over his head like a piñata. It seemed to me at the time that

Trump was never serious about naming Romney his top diplomat but used the pretense to make his political critic pay humiliating and supplicative homage in public—and Romney complied.

Not much was seen or heard from Romney until he began pondering a race for the United States Senate from his Mormon religious capital of Utah. Needing Trump's support—or at least avoiding the President's opposition—Romney again refrained from criticism. In fact, he got downright complimentary of Trump. In return, Trump gave him a solid endorsement. How ironic that Romney would attack Trump on the eve of assuming the very office Trump helped him attain.

Now, just days before he is to be sworn in as the freshman senator from Utah, Romney has resorted again to the mouth-foaming pit bull. Several pundits had questioned Romney's motivation—either implying or calling it out as an act of political stupidity. What is the gain for Romney?

The notoriety and the insincere pragmatic affection of the far left may have had an appeal to his establishment ego, but it does nothing for him as an important influence on the national scene or even in the solemn chamber of America's House of Lords.

It is very arguable that Romney has diminished his influence and effectiveness by taking up the role of show-boating maverick. With the absence of Senators John McCain, Jeff Flake and Bob Corker, Romney will hold that title in solitary confinement.

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His esteem among Democrats will only be expressed when he joins their ranks on specific votes. It will not be bipartisanship because he will never be able to recruit any Democrats to break ranks with their Party leadership to support Republican measures. The McCain, Flake, Corker history has proven that. If he thinks of himself as a bridge spanning the political divide by being an occasional apostate of the Republican agenda, he will soon discover it is a one-way trestle.

Romney's problem is that his latest foray into pandering for attention exposes his double problems—double-dealing and double-crossing. He is the iconic pliable establishmentarian who can propose an Obamacare-like program in Massachusetts and declare the same type of program a national disaster when running for President. He can call out the President in the harshest of terms and then pander in the hope of getting a position in the administration. If Romney were footwear, he would be flip-flops.

Of course, the *Post* editorial brought an unavoidable response from Trump—but one that was surprisingly tempered. The President said:

Here we go with Mitt Romney, but so fast! Question will be, is he a Flake? I hope not. Would much prefer that Mitt focus on Border Security and so many other things where he can be helpful. I won big, and he didn't. He should be happy for all Republicans. Be a TEAM player & WIN!

This was one time when Trump seemed to understand that Romney was better left twisting in the wind with his self-inflicted wounds rather than to generate sympathy with one of the President's more typical pugnacious retaliations. Trump allowed surrogates—like his 2020 campaign manager Brad Parscale—to strike the deeper dagger. Parscale tweeted:

The truth is @MittRomney lacked the ability to save this nation. @RealDonaldTrump has saved it. Jealousy is a drink best served warm and Romney just proved it. So sad, I wish everyone had the courage @Real Donald Trump had.

With his *Post* editorial, Romney created a bit of a kerfuffle in his family. He was dressed down by Republican National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel—or should I say, Ronna ROMNEY McDaniel, niece of the new senator from Utah. She chastised Uncle Mitt and suggested that he focus his criticism on the Democrats. Good advice, belatedly delivered.

And that brings up a good point. One would think that in the middle of the government shutdown—and his own stated support for the metaphoric WALL—Romney would have focused on the obstinance of the congressional Democrats. He would have used his personal inaugural address to speak to the bigger picture and the much, much more critical issues than the President's personality. But Romney is a man full of himself (among other things), who attempts to secure the moral high ground by sniping from the political gutter on the other side of the battle line.

Like other publicity-seeking, tack-on-the-chair politicians, Romney will get noticed and the attention of the left-wing media, but he will have to find a way to restore his credibility among his colleagues in the Senate if he is to have any chance of being more than the attention-craving disruptive school boy that needs to stand in the corner and be quiet while the rest of the class carries on.

So, there 'tis.

*Larry Horist writes Tuesday and Friday commentaries for the Punching Bag Post . . . punchingbagpost.com. This article was posted on Tuesday, January 3, 2019, by Larry Horist, Feature Commentator. **Larry Horist** is a conservative activist with an extensive background in public policy and political issues. Clients of his consulting firm have included such conservative icons as Steve Forbes and Milton Friedman, and he has served as a consultant to the White House under Presidents Nixon and Reagan. He has testified as an expert witness before numerous legislative bodies, including the U.S. Congress and lectured at Harvard University, Northwestern University, Florida Atlantic University, Knox College and Hope College. An award-winning debater, his insightful and sometimes controversial commentaries appear frequently on the editorial pages of newspapers across the nation. He can be reached at lph@thomasandjoyce.com.*

Rick Scott Sworn in as Florida's Senator

On Tuesday, January 8, outgoing Gov. Rick Scott was sworn in by Vice President Mike Pence to be Florida's U.S. Senator, as Sen. Marco Rubio looked on. This is the first time since the 1860s that Florida has been represented by two Republican Senators, and gives the GOP a 53-47 majority in the Senate, a pick-up of two seats.



A Reason to Fight On

By *CS Bennett*

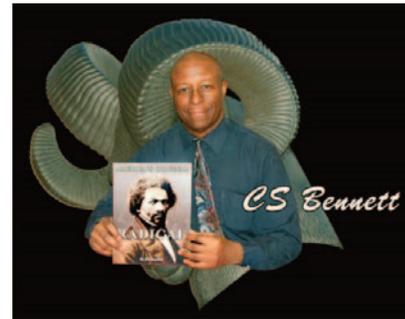
People within the Trump administration appear to be resigning by the week, the stock market is dropping faster than a nose-diving meteorite wearing a rocket pack, the country is divided over building a border wall (or is it a fence?), Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts finds himself siding with the liberal justices (again), and the Democrats are taking over the House in January. On whole, the picture looks bleak for Republicans, conservatives, and conservative independents, to include other lovers of freedom.

Love him or hate him, Trump is standing his ground and from what I can recall, that is exactly what we wanted in our Republican president—a person with a backbone, and one not beholden to anyone in front of, or behind, the scenes. As defenders of this great republic, we need to conduct a massive march on Washington, DC, to show our support for this president and our disdain for an establishment out to derail this president and the people’s agenda. Your voices count. They counted in 2010, 2012, 2016, and yes, in 2018. And they made the difference.

Sure, the Democrats took over the House of Representatives in the midterm but we gained seats in the Senate. And about that House race, if it were not for the 45 Republicans who retired (two of them by way of scandals), we would have probably held onto the House. Forty-five is a large number to overcome. So, pay little mind to those who claim they beat us, when in reality, so many Republicans (most of them Establishment types) bailed out on us because they had little, or no, spine—the never-Trumpers that they were. Anyway, it is good that they are gone.

As we know, the Left is going to come at us with everything they have got when the presidential elections arrive on our doorsteps next year. Still, let us remember why we are in this fight. It is because of our love of country and the principles it was founded on. We love our freedoms, our liberties, our right to bear arms, and our right to pursue happiness. We love our free market system, even our flawed political, and justice, system, which we intend to go in and clean house soon. We fight on because others in our past fought on, even though the odds against them were great.

Though time is not usually on our side, we can still prevail. We must because we are on the right side of history.



Spiritually, we must harness the universal power of nature, and the one true God. Whether it be via prayer, sunbeams, moonbeams, flashes of lightning, stardust, pixie-dust, gamma or pure cosmic rays, we must amass our spiritual powers, in concert, to defend our country and defeat those athwart to our traditions, our values, and our Constitution. If you love America, these are reasons for you to fight on. Our children’s future will be more challenging, and potentially oppressive, if we do not make a stand today and fight these people. I say, let’s take this fight to Washington, DC. And let us show up in large breathtaking numbers.

Yes, a million of us may cause them to blink and their curious eyebrows to rise. But tens of millions of us on the National Mall will make them wet their pants. Only then will they know true power, people power, and tremble. Yes, tens of millions of us marching for accountability and equal justice, will surely rock them to the core. It will also impress upon the Establishment who is truly boss. Yes, it is, and has always been, we the people. Their side boasted, and promised, a wave. We intend to bring about a tidal wave of major proportion the next go round.

So, I warn all, make a stand now, today, and never surrender your power, influence, and rights. Never! Our power resides in our unity. Remember that always.

Curtis S. Bennett is an author, a national conservative talk radio co-host, and a columnist. He is a decorated Gulf War veteran and served as Vice Chairman of the Putnam County Republican Executive Committee.



At the December 10 meeting of the Trump Club 45, more than 1,300 people showed up to hear Dr. Sebastian Gorka, former advisor to President Trump. Held at the Palm Beach Kennel Club, the event featured a book signing of Dr. Gorka’s latest book, *Why We Fight*, following his talk.

Complacency and the Destruction of Venezuela

By Steve Leonard

People question how a country like Venezuela, which 20 years ago was the richest nation in Latin America, could, in such a short time, descend into total chaos with no hope for the future.

There are many reasons for the economic and social collapse of the country, most of which can be laid at the feet of a government implementing policies designed to exert total control over the economic and political life of the country while at the same time dramatically changing the Venezuelan society mores and culture.

Socialists are constantly working on plans to dominate the political, economic and social events in any particular country and then executing against an unsuspecting population. One must be aware that there is a civil war going on, directed at the general population which, if successful, results in everyone except the elite of the controlling party losing their freedom and their future.

What is it that allows this civil war to go undetected until it is too late?—Complacency.

Complacency is what allowed Chavez to impose tyranny. Chavez promised to resolve all the problems of Venezuela, whether it was housing, jobs, food, education, etc. He then quietly proceeded to politicize the military, turned the police and intelligence forces into tools for political manipulation, turned the courts into appendages of his political party, installed a different curriculum and history into the education system, created regulations which stifled private enterprise, took over the health care system, confiscated productive farms, took over whole industries after they were forced to shut down due to excessive regulations, sowed confusion and misery by borrowing and then running the money printing presses, took over the importation and distribution of agricultural products and foodstuffs, undermined all the institutions in the country by changing their functions, allowed criminality to blossom and utilized armed bands to instill fear in the population, took over all communications companies, started a campaign of class warfare, degraded religious values, attacked the churches, employed character assassination against opponents, controlled the election process to ensure that they would remain in power, etc.

Yet, even during the course of these events, Venezuelans remained mostly silent and went about their usual activities confident that the government would eventually resolve the problems. Under their complacent noses, a well planned, organized and properly executed plan for control led them into slavery. But complacency was not the only problem contributing to the enslavement of the population of Venezuela. Even though there were many people who spoke out about what was happening and produced evidence of the shenanigans, there were way too many naysayers not believing what was evident to anyone who took the time to

look. They literally refused to believe that the goal of their government was to bring them all under its control. Even if they had doubts about the direction of the country, they would sit back and say “what can I do?”

Those complacent and naysayers, combined with the degrading economic conditions and greater government control, led to a drastic change in the societal norms and values that had previously allowed the society to flourish and prosper. One may ignore what the government is doing but the government will not ignore you. When governments create regulations and practices that reduce liberties and the ability to care for your family, one becomes dependent on the government for their most basic of needs. Once they are dependent on the government (because it is the only source for what you need—whether it be medicine, food, clothing, etc), they are trapped.

If citizens decide to complain and protest the treatment by their own government, the once docile and servile socialist government will take off its mask and bring out the guns to make you comply. Socialism creeps in through the voting booth but tyranny takes over when the guile of socialism is revealed.

Not accepting reality, nor preparing to take on those promoting socialism with reason and preparation, allows socialist planners to quietly and deftly change minds, change laws, change education, and question morality with the purpose of changing the moral and cultural structure of a country. Once everything becomes relevant and nothing has moral value, then everything that is done is good, including convincing the gullible and complacent that socialism is the answer.

The challenge is to recognize the true objectives of the autocrats, decide on a plan of action and then execute the plan with like-minded individuals and groups. Sitting on your hands and deciding that there is nothing to do for another couple of years only allows the adversaries to advance their plans and further their objectives.

Warning: Can you see any of this happening in the United States of America? Take a look at the up-and-coming self-proclaimed Democrat stars and the pull they are exerting on gullible minds. This is how it begins. How it ends depends on actions to defend the Constitution and the American way of life—not words.



Steve Leonard is a lawyer who has lived in Venezuela for more than 60 years and worked throughout South and Central America. He is another refugee from the realities of communism, currently living in Palm Beach County.

Citizens for National Security Seminar “North Korea and China: War or Peace?”

With Gordon G. Chang

(Editor’s note: Gordon G. Chang was the presenter at the latest seminar sponsored by Citizens for National Security on December 16, 2018 at the Boca West Country Club in Boca Raton. In 2001 I read his book, The Coming Collapse of China, and looking back on it now with the benefit of nearly two decades of hindsight, one can see that it proved prescient, given the mounting problems facing the People’s Republic today. Once again, I want to thank founder, Dr. William A. Saxton for his kind invitation to attend. Unfortunately, due to my absence from the area over the holidays, I was unable to attend the seminar; so what follows is a list of Mr. Chang’s credentials and a brief synopsis of what his seminar was about. By the way, if you go online you can view an hour-long talk Mr. Chang gave on “Trump, China, North Korea: War or Peace?” in 2017 at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs. In that address he said something that gives one great hope for a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Mr. Chang in 2017: “If you can take home two thoughts this morning let it be these: The United States has overwhelming leverage over China and China has overwhelming leverage over North Korea. Now these two points lead to one conclusion and that is we can without the use of force disarm North Korea.”)

Presenter: Gordon G. Chang, a highly-regarded authority on nuclear proliferation in general and the North Korean crisis in particular, is a familiar face on Fox News Channel, CNN, CNBC, PBS, the BBC and Bloomberg Television. Chang lived and worked in China and Hong Kong for almost two decades. His frequent writings on China and North Korea have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The American Conservative*, *Commentary*, *National Review* and *Barron’s*.



In addition, he is the author of *Nuclear Showdown: North Korea Takes on the World*. He has also given briefings at the National Intelligence Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department and the Pentagon.

What It Was About: At the moment, it appears that peace is breaking out on the Korean peninsula. “Fatty the Third” (the Chinese nickname for Kim Jong Un) is not parading intercontinental ballistic missiles through the center of Pyongyang; the South Korean president, Moon Jae-in, wants to end the Korean War and unify the two Koreas; and President Donald Trump, who used to shout “fire and fury,” now speaks as if he is running for a Nobel Peace Prize. This euphoria is unlikely to last as these three leaders, along with China’s Xi Jinping, begin to assert their divergent interests while trying to settle what is perhaps the most intractable-and consequential-dispute on the planet. So what could possibly go wrong? This seminar looked at some of the potential pitfalls.

Congratulations to the Newly-Elected Officers of the Palm Beach County GOP

At the December 12 meeting of the Palm Beach County Republican Executive Committee, the four officers were re-elected. Michael Barnett defeated Derek Schwartz to retain his chairmanship of the County Party, and Tami Donnally defeated Dick Farrel to remain Vice Chair. Cheryl Mullings was also re-elected as Secretary, but without opposition, as was Jane Pike as Treasurer. All will serve another two-year term.



Michael Barnett, Chair



Tami Donnally, Vice Chair



Cheryl Mullings, Secretary



Jane Pike, Treasurer

To WIN, Make Our Arguments PERSONAL

*By Alan J. Huber, CFP
Director, Freedom From ObamaCare*

With the drop of the ball, the 2020 election season officially kicked off.

During the 2018 campaign, my column, was titled: "How to Argue Simply with Liberals." Our failure to properly message and engage the other side was a major factor in the disastrous 2018 results.

So what do we need to do? SIMPLE: 1) Ask Questions, and 2) Make It Personal.

Ben Shapiro agrees with this strategy 100 percent. When asked, "Should illegals receive free healthcare?," a large percentage of liberals and Democrats answer "YES."

But if the question is re-phrased to: "Are you willing to reduce your paycheck 15 percent so illegals can get free healthcare?," what happens to the answer? Chances are, you are right, however. "We don't know. We never asked."

If you ask students on a college campus: "Should DACA recipients get free tuition?," the answer will invariably be "YES." Change the question to: "Are you willing to increase YOUR student loan balance 15 percent so DACA recipients can get free tuition?," then the response changes

to???? We never asked, BUT we can assume almost 100 percent will say no.

Want real fun? Make a blank form for them to sign to increase their student loan balance 15 percent.

Ask questions. Keep it personal by making it about their life, and watch the talking points change.



Alan J. Huber is a certified financial planner™ and director of Freedom From Obamacare, which spreads the word of all the changes Trump made to improve health insurance that the media keeps buried. They are expert in Obamacare alternatives and always willing to help Republican officials.

*Call 855-561-0500 or Alan@FreedomFromObamaCare.com
facebook.com/groups/FreedomFromObamaCare/*

In Memoriam Jack Merkl



It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of long-time Palm Beach County REC member, Jack Merkl. Jack passed away last week in Ohio with his family at his side.

Jack tirelessly served and supported the Palm Beach County Republican Party for well over 20 years and was a Congressional District 19 candidate in 2002. He was always ready and willing to offer his point of view on the important issues of the day and inspired many to step up and answer the call for public service by running for political office.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Merkl family during this time of sorrow.

Thought for the Day

*By Mel & Barbara Grossman
Co-Founders, Palm Beach County Tea Party
Dec 15, 2018*

Kissinger is now 94 years old.

Recently, Henry Kissinger did an interview and said very amazing things regarding President Trump. He starts with: Donald Trump is a phenomenon that foreign countries haven't seen before!

The former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger gives us a new understanding of President Donald Trump's foreign policy and predicts its success: Liberals and all those who favor (Hillary) Clinton will never admit it. They will never admit that he is the one true leader The man is doing changes like never before and does all of it for the sake of this nation's people. After eight years of tyranny, we finally see difference.

Kissinger knows it and he continues with: Every country now has to consider two things: One, their perception that the previous president, or the outgoing president, basically withdrew America from international politics, so that they had to make their own assessments of their necessities

And secondly, that there is a new president who's asking a lot of unfamiliar questions. And because of the combination of the partial vacuum and the new questions, one could imagine that something remarkable and new emerges out of it.

Then Kissinger puts it bluntly: Trump puts America and its people first. This is why people love him and this is why he will remain in charge for so long. There is not a single thing wrong with him and people need to open their eyes. When he boasts that he has a bigger red button than Kim Jung Un does, he so transcends the mealy-mouthed rhetoric of the past, thereby forcing a new recognition of American power.

Kissinger once wrote: The weak grow strong by effrontery "The strong grow weak through inhibition! No sentence better captures the U.S.-North Korea relationship.

Trump is discarding the inhibitions and calling the bluff on North Korea's effrontery: His point is that the contrast of American retreat under Obama and its new assertion of power under Trump creates a new dynamic that every one of our allies and of our enemies must consider.

Our allies grew complaisant with Obama's passivity and now are fearful due to Trump's activism. And they must balance the two in developing their policies: They realize that

the old assumptions, catalyzed by Bush 43's preoccupation with Iraq and Obama's refusal to lead are obsolete.

So, Trump is forcing a new calculus with a new power behind American interests. Those here and abroad who rode the old apple cart worry about its being toppled.

But, as Kissinger so boldly stated: Trump is the one true leader in world affairs and he is forcing policy changes that put America first!

This is the most accurate statement of what the American Citizens who live outside of the swamp want and expect from their government.

I like the list of 13 things that I, as a senior American citizen, want. Trump is at least talking about issues that most Americans are concerned about. My mantra about Trump is this: Truthfully, we are in agreement with most of what he says. We are getting older and our tickers aren't what they used to be, but what matters is that he covers most of the 13 things we as seniors want, at least I do for sure.

1. Hillary: held accountable for her previous wrongs!
2. Put "GOD" back in America!
3. Borders: Closed or tightly guarded!
4. Congress: On the same retirement & healthcare plans as everybody else.
5. Congress: Obey its own laws NOW!
6. Language: English only!
7. Culture: Constitution and the Bill of Rights!
8. Drug-Free: Mandatory Drug Screening before & during Welfare!
9. Freebies: NONE to Non-Citizens!
10. Budget: Balance the damn thing!
11. Foreign Countries: Stop giving them our money! Charge them for our help! We need it here.
12. Term limits for Congress.

And most of all:

13. "RESPECT OUR MILITARY AND OUR FLAG!"
And our police.

I added:

14. DRAIN THE DAMN SWAMP!!!!

Book Review

***An Empire of Wealth: The Epic History of American Economic Power*, by John Steele Gordon. New York: Harper Collins, 2004. Hardcover, 460 pp. ISBN 0-06-009362-5.**

In the frontispiece of this book, author, John Steele Gordon provides a quote by martyred President John F. Kennedy about America's destiny as a nation from the speech "he did not live to deliver in Dallas, November 22, 1963," which reads, "We in this country . . . are—by destiny rather than by choice—the watchmen on the walls of world freedom." Decades later, President Ronald Reagan used our country's strongest weapon in that struggle—our economy—to win the Cold War. That's what this book is about—the history of the single most indispensable thing underpinning everything we are and do in this world and "the secret to our power and influence"—the American economy. It had humble beginnings.

In the 1670s, immigrants to our shores had very little, but they possessed a "willingness to accept present discomfort and risk for the hope of future riches" and that characteristic has continued among "the millions to follow in the next two centuries." This continuing attitude on the part of our people has had a "profound effect on the history of the American economy," making it the envy of the world. The development over the centuries of that economy and the liberty championed in our political system has unleashed a unique degree of creativity in our people that no other nation has or is able to duplicate to the degree that has occurred in America. Call it Yankee ingenuity. Again and again that ingenuity has served to solve any problem, overcome any challenge and develop new technology at a breathtaking rate.

I greatly enjoyed the section in the book about the *robber barons*, the term that "came to stand for the men of whom Cornelius Vanderbilt [railroad pioneer] was one of the first, who built great industrial and transportation empires in the late nineteenth-century American economy. While some of these men were capable of ruthlessness, gross dishonesty, and self-aggrandizement (and others were honest men who scrupulously stayed within what were often inadequate laws), none of them merely transferred wealth to themselves from others by their activities. They all built vast wealth-creating enterprises. Regardless, the term is obviously here to stay."

There's a dirty little secret in the American economy that socialists who speak ill of the *robber barons* never were able to grasp. "At the end of his life, [banker] J. P. Morgan was asked at a congressional hearing, "Is not commercial

credit based primarily upon money or property?"

"No sir," replied Morgan. "The first thing is character."

"Before money or property?"

"Before money or property or anything else," Morgan insisted. "Money cannot buy it. . . . Because a man I do not trust could not get money from me on all the bonds in Christendom."

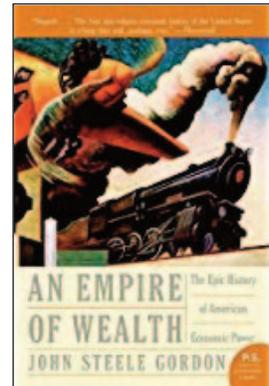
According to author, Gordon, who is a columnist for American

Heritage, "When General Electric was formed in 1892 by J. P. Morgan from the Edison General Electric Company and its major competitor, Thompson Houston Electric Company, the new company almost immediately established a laboratory of its own at its headquarters in Schenectady, New York. It quickly became the model for a number of other corporate research labs that in the twentieth century would turn out an unending stream of inventions and practical applications of new technology. The list of the fruits of Edison's seminal idea to industrialize the process of invention—to industrialize Yankee ingenuity—is nearly endless: cellophane, nylon, synthetic rubber, transistors, Teflon, and microprocessor being but a few of the most important. In 2003 IBM alone would take out more than thirty-four hundred patents."

Here's another myth the book addresses—the "myth that monopolies will raise prices once they have the power to do so. Monopolies, like everyone else, want to maximize their profits, not their prices. What makes them so economically evil is that without competitive pressure, they become highly risk-averse—and therefore shy away from [the golden goose of creative Yankee] innovation."

Yet another myth the book explodes is the false belief, especially among Democrats, that FDR's "New Deal cured the ailing U.S. economy in the 1930s. It didn't. The war [WW II] did."

There is a particularly fascinating part of the book, in which the author tells the story of how Andrew Carnegie built his steel business in Pittsburgh. It is a delightful tale, leading Carnegie to exclaim of his own wondrous creation, "Was there ever such a business!" Pretty much the same thing can be said about America's economic might. Read this book and you will be left wondering "Was there ever such [an economy]!"



—Tom Mullings

Book Review

***Disconnected: How to Reconnect Our Digitally Distracted Kids*, by Thomas Kersting, 2016, ISBN: ISBN-13: 9781541130975; ISBN-10: 154113097, self-published, available at Barnes & Noble and other book sellers for \$5.99 and postage, 98 pages.**

Tom Kersting and this book first came to my attention on the *Tucker Carlson Tonight* TV show twice in the last weeks of 2018. Kersting has been a school counselor and psychoanalyst for a number of years. The book mentions that CNN had a special report on the subject of pediatricians updating their recommendations for screen time for kids in October 2015. The book gives a URL location for this that has since been changed to: <https://www.cnn.com/2015/10/05/health/being-13-teens-social-media-study/index.html>. Finding this demonstrated CNN has many other stories since that date on this subject.

CBS' *60 Minutes* had a special report by Anderson Cooper on December 9, 2018 that you can view at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/groundbreaking-study-examines-effects-of-screen-time-on-kids-60-minutes/>. This is a 13-minute video if you watch it and the accompanying ads.

I mentioned these other sources to point out that Tom Kersting is not alone in his assessment of the use of cell phones by children with developing brains. A lot is going on at the National Institutes of Health and in an unknown number of clinical studies. Enough for me to be concerned about my grandchildren and yours too.

Kersting says he has been on a high school referral and intervention committee to recommend what to do with student failures in keeping up with grade levels since 2002, and that symptoms like ADHD began shooting up in 2009. ADHD can be diagnosed beginning at age 5, but 14 and 15-year olds began to be diagnosed in an increasing number, and he wondered what was going on. He discovered the smartphone and other digital devices were at the source of some of these problems. He began speaking to groups of 100 or 200 parents at different schools to see what parents and teachers were doing about this, and in the face-to-face interplay Kersting learned that these devices were a problem for lots of young people.

As a retired pharmacist, I am asked about prescription drugs all of the time. When ADHD was on the uptick in the mid-2001 to 2009 time period, noticed the questions about the use of Ritalin and other drugs were increasing. Some pediatricians knew little, others knew more. Now the professional standards arms of the medical professions are hammering out treatment recommendations. Kersting does not cover these.

The book is 10 chapters in three parts. It is a breezy and short read about his success in straightening out or rescuing students from sure failure. Part 1 is about "The Impact of Electronic Devices on Kids' Brains." Part 2 is about "Technology's Effect on Social, Emotional, and Family Growth." Part 3 is

about "What Parents Can Do: Tips, Techniques, and Solutions."

Kersting has uncovered a growing number of young people who are simply addicted to telephones, videos, and TV. He says cyberspace children are a full-time job. Teachers and administrators detected a growing mental health problem among students. Physical realities and distractibility are two categories of problems.

Kersting does not mention dyslexia and its many forms as a part of the brain development process. So, we do not know if he sees any overlap. Let me add that others who study dyslexia find 20 percent of students may be affected by reading problems in this category.

Kersting has not analyzed the perpetrators of school shootings in this book, but they ought to be studied to see if there are connections.

Social media does affect self-esteem. Overuse of devices causes an anxiety about a fear of missing out (FOMO). Kersting gives warning signs. The behavior with devices may have legal consequences. Posting inappropriately on social media can get kids into trouble.

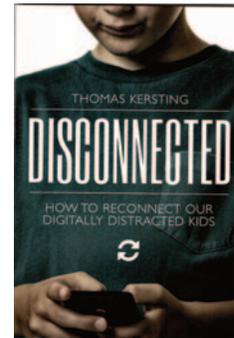
Kids must often multi-task, which causes constant switching in the front part of the brain responsive for executive function, Kersting says. There are dramatic differences between high multitaskers and low multitaskers that have been compared in studies using MRIs to view the brain's work. There are 28 notes citing reports, articles and studies in the book for Part 1.

Kids who get caught up in video games for 12 hours a day can become seriously disconnected. Another five citations are given to support this conclusion. Even families who go out to dinner together can be seen using their telephones and not talking to each other. Kersting says check it out next time your family goes out.

Coaches have to suspend telephone use to get boys to pay attention to learning a sport. Devices must be forbidden at family times so everyone can develop their face time, Kersting says.

Electronic devices affect emotional development and this cannot be taught in the classroom. Emotional IQ or EQ has five parts: Self-awareness, Self-Management, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills, all of which are defined by research professors. But many students do not have these because they over use hand-held devices during their brain-developing ages.

We have the dilemma of college student fragility with some college professors afraid to give low grades because of



Disconnected—continued on next page

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the resulting student meltdowns they would have to deal with. Heads of counseling in a group of colleges have studied what they are facing. Kersting says Prof. Clifford Nass comments that the same area of the brain that is affected by multitasking is also the area responsible for managing emotions. “When a message comes to the brain, the first thing it does is to go to the emotional center of the brain, the area known as the amygdala. A brain that is working effectively will send that message to the cerebral cortex, which decides what to do with the information. People with low emotional intelligence have a weak connection between the emotional part of the brain (the amygdala) and the thinking part of the brain (the cerebral cortex). This weak connection leads to a host of different issues like social anxiety, general anxiety, and depression. . . .” (p. 65).

Kersting is one among many people studying the issues of using screen devices among teenagers and other ages. He

has incorporated what he has leaned into his counseling routines and helped save some lives. He is clearly concerned and lays out some good suggestions that parents and their helpers can try to get your brain developing students back on track.

If you have any doubts about how the devices with screens are affecting teens, ask some of your grandchildren. One of my grandsons says when he has looked at these apps, he found that Snapchat was the most nagging of them all because it wanted him to visit every day multiple times. So he avoids that one. There is some research from Pew Research that supports this observation.

Another brand-new way to learn more about the development of young minds is listen to the podcast on a similar topic at: *The Coddling of the American Mind* by Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt a podcast at: <https://dts.podtrac.com/redirect.mp3/cdn.cato.org/CatoAudio/2018/ca-12-18-04.mp3>

—Reviewed by William J. Skinner

To the Editor

Tom, you thought I wouldn't agree with your assessment of our relationship with Saudi Arabia? I detest Saudi Arabia and all they stand for with their madrassas, hatred of Jews and Christians, torture of opponents, and on and on. But, the United States must stand with them, as distasteful as it may be. If Jimmy Carter had let the Shah remain in power our world would be very different today. So many of our “allies” are despicable, yet we must keep them in power to avoid further deterioration. If we stop the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia it will be a disaster for Israel, the Middle East, the United States and the world. Hopefully Trump won't cave on this . . . it's too important.

Another great newsletter. Please put me on the mailing list. It's too bad it doesn't have a larger circulation since it is so well done and informative. Thanks for sharing it.

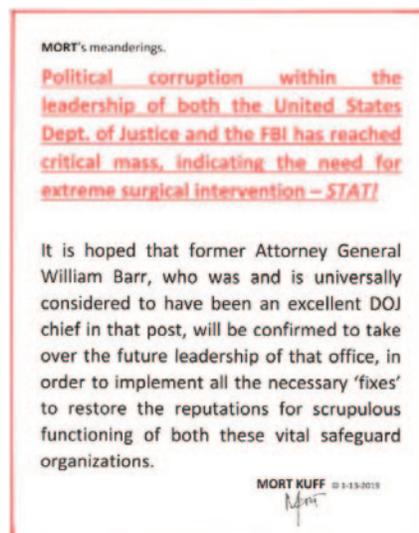
*Eve Bazer
Fort Lauderdale*

Tom, I get a lot of attaboys when I send out the Newsletter but this one is more effusive than most—thought you'd enjoy it, too. I agree with her that this is one of your best, so far.

*Geo. Blumel
Atlantis*

“George, you just amaze me and light a fire under me with everything you write! YE GADS, how many people can I get to read this!?! It is terrific writing and research! I liked all the articles and will reread them and forward. Why aren't there more selfless Republicans like you?! You were so right with the ‘you'll like it’ because it's one of the BEST letters yet!”

“Cheers, Babs”



Editor's Postscript

Pompeo's Speech in Cairo

By Tom Mullings

Actually, this article is about two speeches, the first in 2009 by then-President Obama at the American University in Cairo, Egypt, and the second on January 10, 2019, by current U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo at the same venue, and what a contrast in approach to American foreign policy they represent. Pompeo's speech "delivered a scathing rebuke of the Obama Administration's Mideast policies," sending a message to friends and foes alike that the time for America's representatives touring the region apologizing for every sin known to man is over.

Unlike Obama before him, Pompeo was in Cairo to speak the truth, and did he ever. "This trip is especially meaningful for me as an evangelical Christian, coming so soon after Coptic Church's Christmas celebrations. We're all children of Abraham: Christians, Muslims, Jews. In my office I keep a Bible open on my desk to remind me of God and his word, and The Truth," he said. "And it's the truth, lower-case 't,' that I'm here to talk about today. It is a truth that isn't often spoken in this part of the world, but because I'm a military man by training, I'll be very blunt today: America is a force for good in the Middle East."

Then the Secretary of State went after the previous administration in no uncertain terms, telling those gathered for his address at the 100-year-old university that "our leaders have gravely misread our history, and your historical moment. These fundamental misunderstandings, set forth in this city in 2009, adversely affected the lives of hundreds of millions of people in Egypt and across the region. Remember: It was here, in this city, that another American stood before you. He told you that radical Islamist terrorism does not stem from an ideology. He told you that 9/11 led my country to abandon its ideals, particularly in the Middle

East. He told you that the United States and the Muslim world needed, quote, 'a new beginning,' end of quote. The result of these misjudgments have been dire. In falsely seeing ourselves as a force for what ails the Middle East, we were timid in asserting ourselves when the times—and our partners—demanded it."

"We grossly underestimated the tenacity and viciousness of radical Islamism, a debauched strain of the faith that seeks to upend every other form of worship or governance," said the Secretary. "ISIS drove to the outskirts of Baghdad as America hesitated. They raped and pillaged and murdered tens of thousands of innocents. They birthed a caliphate across Syria and Iraq and launched terror attacks that killed all across continents.

"America's reluctance to wield our influence kept us silent as the people of Iran rose up against the mullahs in Tehran in the Green Revolution. The ayatollahs and their henchmen murdered, jailed, and intimidated freedom-loving Iranians, and they wrongly blamed America for this when it was their own tyranny that had fueled it. Emboldened, the regime spread its cancerous influence to Yemen, Iraq, Syria and still further into Lebanon.

"America's penchant, for wishful thinking led us to look the other way as Hezbollah, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Iranian regime, accumulated an arsenal of 130,000 rock-



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Photo Am Nabil/AP

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ets and missiles, stored and positioned them in Lebanese towns and villages in violation of international law [and] aimed [them] squarely at our ally Israel.

“When Bashar Assad unleashed terror upon Syrians and barrel-bombed civilians with sarin gas, we condemned his actions, but did nothing.

“So today, what did we learn from all this? We learned that when America retreats, chaos often follows. When we neglect our friends, resentment builds. And when we partner with enemies, they advance. The good news is this: The age of self-inflicted American shame is over, and so are the policies that produced so much needless suffering.

“In less than two years, the United States under President Trump has reasserted its traditional role as a force for good in this region. And look at what we’ve accomplished together. Under new leadership, America has confronted the ugly reality of radical Islamism. President Trump called on Muslim-majority nations, quote, ‘to conquer extremism and vanquish the forces of terrorism.’ President Sisi joined us in denouncing the twisted ideology which has brought death and suffering to so many and I thank President Sisi for his courage.

“In that same spirit, just last year, America bolstered a coalition of allies and partners to dismantle the Islamic State’s caliphate, liberating Iraqis, Syrians, Arabs and Kurds, Muslims and Christians, men women and children. And now 99 percent of the territory ISIS once held is liberated. Think about the people we’re helping. Last year, I hosted the first-ever Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom in Washington. At that conference, our ambassador-at-large recounted his trip to Iraq. There he met Yezidi women

who had been sold into bondage, whose children had been ripped out of their arms. Life under ISIS was a living hell on Earth. Today, those areas are liberated, thanks to our coalition’s power and might and commitment.

“Let us turn to Iran. President Trump has reversed our willful blindness to the danger of the regime and withdrew from the failed nuclear deal, with its false promises. The U.S. re-imposed sanctions that never should have been lifted. And importantly, we fostered a common understanding with our allies of the need to counteract the Iran regime’s revolutionary agenda. Nations are rallying to our side to confront the regime like never before.”

What a truly memorable speech this was. It provided a score card cataloging the horrific results of Barak Obama’s naïve, cowardly policies in the Middle East of “leading from behind” and apologizing for imaginary American transgressions. It also demonstrated how the accomplishments of President Trump’s own diametrically opposed policies have turned things around there in a hurry and put us on the path for more progress against the forces of radical Islamism in the near future. Trump’s critics accuse him of being an isolationist and anti-alliance. His Secretary of State’s speech at the American University in Cairo Egypt strongly suggests that just the opposite is in play in his administration’s foreign policy in that troubled, but vitally important, oil-rich, region of the world.

Tom Mullings is a decorated Army infantry combat veteran of the Vietnam War, who served as a scout dog handler with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. He was one of the three original incorporators of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, and is a long-time Republican Executive Committeeman from precinct 5154 in Palm Beach County.



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REPUBLICAN PARTY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

January 2019 issue of the Newsletter, published monthly by the Republican Party of Palm Beach County. The views and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial staff, REC Board of Directors, or the Palm Beach County Republican Executive Committee. Letters to the editor are welcomed but should be no longer than 500 words and may be edited for length and content. All submissions are property of their respective authors and may not be reproduced without prior permission of the author. Any comments, questions, or other feedback should be directed to tommullings@comcast.net.

Mission Statement

The Republican Party of Palm Beach County is committed to promoting Republican ideals and principles; recruiting and electing qualified candidates for public office; developing a grassroots organization that will motivate the electorate to vote; and raising the funds necessary to complete these objectives.

www.palmbeach.gop



Republican Executive Committee Membership Application

The Republican Executive Committee (also known as the REC) is the governing body of the Republican Party of Palm Beach County. The REC elects the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Party. Members of the REC also approve the Party's constitution; Rules, Policies & Procedures; and budget.

Members of the Republican Executive Committee represent registered Republicans who live in their precinct and serve as the Party's liaison to the Republicans within that precinct. REC members are expected to maintain contact with Republicans living in their precinct and to keep them informed as to what is going on in the Republican Party. This can be done through E-mail or other means like regular mail, phone calls and/or walking your precinct. The REC is the basis for our grassroots efforts and we rely on REC Members to organize and develop their precincts, recruit new volunteers, recruit candidates to fill vacancies on the REC, find sign locations for Republican candidates, register new Republican voters and work to get out the Republican vote in their precincts during elections. The role of committeeman or committeewoman is essential to Republican Party's and our candidates' success in Palm Beach County.

REC Committeeman & Committeewoman Duties and Responsibilities

1. Expected to donate financially to the Republican Party of Palm Beach County
2. Attend REC Meetings
3. Organize your precinct and carry out the policies and programs of the Party within your precinct. Active participation in the various programs of the Party is expected.
4. Serve on a Party Committee.
5. Develop a presence in the broader community by joining a Republican Club; serving on a local board or committee; or monitoring local media for relevant material.

ALL APPLICANTS FOR THE REC MUST BE A REGISTERED REPUBLICAN IN PALM BEACH COUNTY. PLEASE COMPLETE THIS REC APPLICATION FORM AND RETURN IT ALONG WITH A PHOTO COPY OF THE FRONT OF YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION CARD. ANY APPLICATION RECEIVED WITHOUT A COPY OF THE APPLICANT'S VOTER REGISTRATION CARD WILL NOT BE PROCESSED. YOU WILL ALSO NEED THE SIGNATURES BELOW OF TWO CURRENT REC MEMBERS. THE DEADLINE FOR ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS IS 11:00 AM, 14 DAYS PRIOR TO THE REC MEETING.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

E-mail*: _____

* Check here if you DO NOT want your email reported to the Supervisor of Elections thus making it a matter of public record under Florida law. _____

Profession: _____

Precinct #: _____

I am applying for the position of: Committeeman _____ Committeewoman _____

Two Current REC Members' Sponsor Signatures:

1). _____ REC Precinct # _____ 2). _____ REC Precinct # _____

Please return your REC Application to the Republican Party of Palm Beach County Headquarters,
1555 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd., Suite 500, West Palm Beach 33401 Phone (561) 686-1616



Republican Party of Florida Party Loyalty Oath

I, _____, swear and/or affirm that during my term of
(Name of Member – Please write clearly)

office I will not actively, publicly, or financially support the election of any candidate seeking election against:

- (1) The Republican Party's nominee in a partisan unitary, general, or special election that includes a Republican nominee; or
- (2) A registered Republican in a non-partisan election except that this provision does not apply to judicial races under Chapter 105, Florida Statutes.

I further swear or affirm that, in a contested Republican primary election, I will not support the nomination of one Republican candidate over another in my capacity as a Republican County Executive Committee member unless the Party has voted to endorse under RPOF Rule 8. This provision does not preclude me from supporting in any manner my personal Republican candidate of choice in a contested Republican primary election, provided I do not express such support with public reference to my title or office within the Republican Party of Florida.

Signature of Member

Signature of Witness

County/Precinct #

Date

Office: _____

**(State Committeeman, State Committeewoman; Precinct Committeeman, Precinct Committeewoman;
Alt. Precinct Committeeman, Alt. Precinct Committeewoman)**

Address, as it appears on voter registration

Email

City, State, Zip

Phone Number

**CANDIDATE OATH -
PRECINCT COMMITTEEMEN AND
COMMITTEEWOMEN**

OFFICE USE ONLY

OATH OF CANDIDATE (Section 99.021, Florida Statutes)

I, _____
 (PLEASE PRINT NAME AS YOU WISH IT TO APPEAR ON THE BALLOT * -- NAME MAY NOT BE CHANGED AFTER THE END OF QUALIFYING)

am a candidate for the office of Precinct _____ Committeeman _____ Committeewoman _____ Precinct Number _____.

I am a qualified elector of _____ County, Florida; I am qualified under the Constitution and the Laws of Florida to hold the office to which I desire to be nominated or elected; and I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Florida.

Candidate's Florida Voter Registration Number (located on your voter information card): _____

* Please print name phonetically on the line below as you wish it to be pronounced on the audio ballot for persons with disabilities (see instructions on page 2 of this form): _____

STATEMENT OF PARTY (Section 99.021, Florida Statutes)

I am a member of the _____ Party; I have not been a registered member of any other political party for 365 days before the beginning of qualifying preceding the general election for which I seek to qualify; and I have paid the assessment levied against me, if any, as a candidate for said office by the executive committee of the political party, of which I am a member.

X

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Signature of Candidate

Telephone Number

Email Address

Address

City

State

ZIP Code

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me this _____ **day of** _____, **20** _____.

Personally Known: _____ or

Produced Identification: _____

Type of Identification Produced: _____

Signature of Notary Public

Print, Type, or Stamp Commissioned Name of Notary Public