

## 2018 Election Season Takes Shape

The results of this year’s midterm elections will be enormously important — not just in shaping the future of Donald Trump’s presidency, but in shaping the American political landscape for a great many years to come. Why are the midterm elections so important? Depending on how well Democrats do, the party could kill the Republican legislative agenda in Congress, expand the investigations into Trump’s administration and its ties with Russia, block confirmations of Trump’s nominees, pass new state laws across the nation, and take offices with power over the 2021 redistricting process.

What offices are up for election in 2018 ... the whole House of Representatives (435 seats), a third of the US Senate, 36 governorships, and many state legislative seats.

### US Senate



**Senator Bill Nelson** is up for re-election this year. Although he has not filed to run yet, it is widely

expected that **Governor Rick Scott** will challenge Nelson for the Senate seat. Scott has said he will announce his decision following the end of the 2018 legislative session. He has already raised more than \$1.1 million through the New Republican PAC, a super PAC created in 2013 but rebranded and stocked by top consultants from Scott’s previous campaigns in 2017. Its aim is to rebrand the Republican Party in the wake of President Donald Trump’s ascent to the White House. Recent public opinion surveys show that Nelson and Scott are essentially tied when matched against each other for the Senate seat.

### US Representative – District 16

Currently, there are six people that have thrown their hat in the ring to challenge **Rep. Vern Buchanan** (D16) -- **Eric Allen** (Green Party),

**Sean Canfield** (NPA); **Calen Cristiani** (DEM); **Robert Kaplan** (NPA), **Jan Schneider** (DEM), and **David Shapiro** (DEM). After an early start, Calen Cristiani’s campaign has essentially gone silent as local attorney David Shapiro’s campaign has stepped up. As of right now, Shapiro has roughly \$191,000 on hand after some large donations from individual supporters. Buchanan has more than \$2 million at his disposal, funded by PACs and individuals. Shapiro ran for the Florida House in 2006, and lost narrowly to Doug Holder in a strong Republican district. He is campaigning on affordable healthcare and preparing for climate change.

**Schneider**, a Sarasota attorney, has filed to run for the Congressional seat for the sixth time. Schneider also challenged Buchanan in 2016, beating out Lakewood Ranch airline pilot Brent King in the primary, but fell short in the general with 40 percent of voter support. This year her campaign is focused on support for Medicare for All and protecting Social Security.

CD 16 covers all or parts of Sarasota, Manatee, and Hillsborough counties. Buchanan, of Longboat Key, is in his sixth term representing the district.

### US Representative – District 17

**Tom Rooney**, whose Florida district includes Okeechobee, Sebring, and Punta Gorda, joins a growing list of incumbents not running for re-election in 2018. According to Ballotpedia, nine Democratic and 23 Republican members of Congress have decided not to run for reelection in 2018.

**Greg Steube** will be resigning his seat in the Florida Senate to run for this seat, as will **Julio Gonzalez**. They will clearly be the favorites in the Republican primary. Currently there are two other Republicans – **William Akins** and **John Sawyer III** and two Democrats – **April Freeman** and **William Pollard, Jr.** that have filed to run for the District 17 seat.

**Gonzalez** is an orthopedic surgeon who also  
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## 2018 Legislative Session in Review

**STEPHANIE OWENS**

Florida League of Women Voters  
Legislative Advocate -  
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The 2018 Florida Legislative Session, extended for three days, ended Sunday March 11, 2018 when the Legislature passed an \$88.7 billion state budget. Together we have witnessed what is sure to be a session long remembered in Florida history for the fastest, most sweeping gun safety legislation developed, passed, and signed by the Governor in the past 20 years — as a response to the February 14, 2018 assault weapon tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Here are some of the winners and losers in terms of the League’s Legislative Priorities.

### EDUCATION

HB 7055 – We started with over 15 bills, but in week five, they were all combined into a “train” bill in HB 7055, reminiscent of the same process of the last session. This year however, there were a few bright spots:

#### Winners:

- Providing Reading Scholarships for students failing the FSA in grades 3-5 to give parents money to cover costs for tutors or other materials.
- Allowing districts to receive 100% of the 1.5 mills capital outlay and district flexibility to have schools that did not meet State K-12 building code standards.
- Permitting a broader range of dual enrollment courses.

#### Losers:

- Expanding the voucher program to allow students who face bullying or harassment in public school’s transfer to private schools using tax-funded vouchers.
- The vouchers will be paid for by car buyers, who in registering their cars will be able to select the option of donating a portion of their sales tax to the “hope scholarship” program. It is expected to

Continued on pg. 8

## What We Need to Do to Stop Violence in Our Schools

**Tuesday, March 27, 6:30pm**  
**Fogartyville, 525 Kumquat Court**

we are now locally and where this movement to stop violence in our schools and in our society needs to go.



A forum, organized by Protect Our Public Schools (POPS) Manasota, with activists, students, teachers and parents leading a community discussion on what we can do here in Sarasota and Manatee Counties to work towards achieving what the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School have so stirringly captured in their rallying cry of #Never Again Will We Fear for Our Lives. Just three days after the March for Our Lives, this forum will be an important time to look at where

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# Environmental Film Series Kicks off in April

BY COOPER LEVEY-BAKER

Transition Sarasota, a nonprofit that works to create food and economic security by supporting local, sustainable sources, is partnering with the Florida U.S. Green Building Council, City of Sarasota Ready for 100% Clean Renewable Energy for All and Solutions to Avoid Red Tide to offer Green Movies That Matter, a new monthly film series that kicks off on **Friday, April 27**.

Combining Transition Sarasota's Films for a Future and the Florida U.S. Green Building Council's statewide film screenings, the new series will feature documentaries that spotlight important environmental and social issues, covering topics such as the environmental impact of the typical American diet, plastic pollution in the ocean and the expected effects of rising sea levels. Green Movies That Matter provides an excellent monthly venue where area residents can meet and join one of the many local environmental organizations whose members are devoting their energies to making a difference.

The first film, *The True Cost*, will be shown at 7 p.m. on **Friday, April 27**, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 3975 Fruitville Road, Sarasota. The movie

explores the environmental impact of the modern clothing industry, as well as its effects on human rights around the globe. Attendees are invited to come to a pre-screening social hour that begins at 6 p.m., to meet organization members and green corporate sponsors and enjoy complimentary refreshments.

After *The True Cost*, Green Movies That Matter will be shown at the Unitarian Universalist Church at 7 p.m. on the fourth Friday of every month through October. Visit [usgbcflorida.org/calendar](http://usgbcflorida.org/calendar) to purchase tickets (\$10) and to see a complete list of upcoming films. The series will also include two screenings at Mote Marine Laboratory, 1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota. *Troubled Waters* will be shown at Mote at noon on **Tuesday, May 8**, and *A Plastic Ocean* will be screened at Mote at noon on **Thursday, Sept. 13**.



## Streets of Paradise

SUBMITTED BY GREG CRUZ;  
EDITED BY REBEKAH LEOPOLD

Sarasota is characterized by the steep divide between the wealth of its richest citizens, and the abject poverty of its poorest citizens. Homeless people in Sarasota are often overlooked and pushed aside. But with their Streets of Paradise project, Greg Cruz and Allan Mestel show through pictures and stories that Sarasota's homeless are worthy of our attention and care.

The City of Sarasota has a long history of unfriendliness to the homeless community. In 2006, Sarasota was named the "meanest city"

in the country by advocates for the homeless, and in 2017 the city settled a lawsuit with the ACLU over its punitive laws regarding camping and panhandling. Sarasota's homeless citizens continue to be seen as a nuisance rather than as people.

Mestel, a photographer, and Cruz, an activist, are changing that narrative and reminding everyone of the humanity of homeless people. Greg has been conducting outreach in the homeless community for the last six years, and Allan thought that their efforts combined could create a greater impact.

Because Sarasota isn't known for its hospitality to homeless people, they were initially met with skepticism. People in Sarasota's homeless community tend to be mistreated or ignored, and were suspicious about why anyone would want to photograph and get to know them. Cruz explained that they didn't want to exploit anyone. Instead, they hoped to foster ongoing relationships with the people they met while documenting the reality of life on the streets and bringing awareness and understanding to the plight of the homeless.

Cruz and Mestel have heard some incredible stories from the people they've encountered. One was among the schoolchildren in a Sarasota classroom with President George W. Bush on September 11, 2001, another is a descendant of one of Sarasota's founding families. They've also heard the all too familiar stories of how people ended up on the streets: untreated mental illness is a major factor, as is addiction.

They realized their Streets of Paradise side project had the potential to be an incredible resource both for raising awareness of Sarasota's



photo credit : Allan Mestel Photography

homeless community and for helping meet immediate needs. They are in the process of establishing a 501c3 to support their mission.

In the meantime, they've been soliciting donations on social media for urgently-needed items like clothing during the cold snap and delivering them to the very people whose stories they are beginning to curate. They've also partnered with Food Not Bombs to do foodshares every Tuesday and Thursday night at 7:30 pm in the parking lot adjacent to the bus depot in downtown Sarasota.

**PEACO**  
EDUCATION &  
ACTION CENTER

Critical Times is a publication of the Peace Education and Action Center.

### MISSION:

The Peace Education and Action Center connects and empowers people to build a socially just, non-violent and sustainable community and world.

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# Rooftop Solar to Expand Again in Sarasota

LYNN NILSSEN, SARASOTA  
READY FOR 100, SOLAR CO-OP  
COORDINATOR

The non-profit Solar United Neighbors of Florida will be returning to Sarasota this May to provide another Solar Co-op to interested homeowners. The success of last year's co-op ranks Sarasota 2nd in total kW installed at 702 of all the SUN FL co-ops in the state.

Does the idea of never having to pay another electric bill appeal to you? Have you wanted to do something to curb your carbon footprint? Would you like to increase the value of your home?

Florida's solar net metering laws allow for a homeowner with solar panels who produces more energy than they need to receive money back from the utility. A solar PV system on your home would not only allow you to scrap your energy bill, but also earn you money from your panels.

According to the SolarResourceGuide.org, a homeowner with a typical 6 kW residential solar power system can expect to reduce their CO2 emissions by 300,000 pounds over 25 years. That's equivalent to not driving 585,450 miles or planting about 3,474 trees.

A Lawrence Berkeley Lab analysis provides a compelling financial reason to install solar. According to that analysis, each watt of solar adds about \$3 to the value of the home. If we consider the installation of a standard 6 kW system, the value of the home should increase by \$18,000 (6,000 w\*\$3).

Have you thought about putting solar on your roof but hesitated because you've thought that it's too expensive or are unsure where to start?

With the recent advances in solar PV technology, the cost of the average residential system has dropped 75% within the past 7 years, and the 30% Federal Income Tax credit provides additional savings. Put your roof to good use - start using the sun to print money! You'll immediately see a return of approximately 8% to 20%, and a full 100% within 7 to 10 years (depending on your energy bills and system size).

Going solar with a co-op saves you money and makes going solar easier, while helping to build a community of solar supporters. Solar United



Terry Langlois (w/ DeeAnna Dowdle) participated in the first Sarasota Co-op.

Neighbors of Florida (SUN FL), a local non-profit, provides technical expertise and support throughout the entire process, helping you feel confident in your decision to go solar. With their bulk purchasing power, Co-op members save an average of 20% or more compared to the cost of an individual installation. This service is provided at no cost to members and there is no obligation to purchase.

"I couldn't be happier. The entire co-op experience led by Solar United Neighbors of Florida was great, their expertise and desire to help homeowners go solar convinced me to join the co-op. I'm 100% satisfied with my system and the selected installer. I'm now powering my home and car with abundant clean emission free Florida sunshine!" - Terry L. (2017 Sarasota Solar Co-op Member) insert picture with quote

How does the co-op purchase work? SUN FL helps groups of neighbors form co-ops, which then provide members discounts on their purchases of solar systems for their homes. Once the group reaches a critical mass of members (roughly 30 good roofs), it issues a request for proposals from area installers. Each bid contains the itemized solar installation by member home, allowing the installer to provide

individualized proposals to each co-op member. The co-op reviews all bids with the technical support of SUN FL and selects a single installer to install the systems on co-op member homes. Each participant owns their own system and has their own contract with the installer.

Who is Solar United Neighbors of Florida? SUN FL expands access to solar by educating Floridians about the benefits of distributed solar energy, helping them organize group solar installations, and strengthening Florida's solar policies and its community of solar supporters. SUN FL is a project of the Community Power Network, a national network of grassroots local, state, and national organizations working to build, and promote locally based renewable energy projects and policies. The organization manages similar programs in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, and West Virginia.

To learn more and be notified when the co-op opens in May, sign up for the SUN FL newsletter: <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/stay-informed/>

## The Clean Energy Revolution is Here!

BY LYNN NILSSEN

According to the Department of Energy, there are five times more jobs in the renewable energy sector than in the coal and gas industry. Energy companies are building solar PV projects that can deliver energy at half the cost of fossil fuels. In 2016, Florida's solar growth rate was 110% - the highest in the U.S.

The Sierra Club Ready for 100 Campaign is challenging 100 cities across the US to adopt 100% Renewable energy goals. 50 cities have already committed to empowering their communities to set and achieve their own 100% renewable energy goals.

The city of Sarasota is one of them with 5 active volunteer teams working with the city to achieve the 100% goal. This has inspired the launch of Ready for 100 campaigns in Bradenton and North Port.

The City of Sarasota will be holding the next Ready for 100 Implementation Community Workshop on April 18th at 6:00 pm at the Robert L. Taylor Complex.

To learn more about Ready for 100 and how you can join us in making a 100% renewable energy future possible, contact Lynn at [lynnsierra@nilssen.us](mailto:lynnsierra@nilssen.us) - Sarasota, Jim at [willardjim2@gmail.com](mailto:willardjim2@gmail.com) - Bradenton and Carolann at [carolannndem@gmail.com](mailto:carolannndem@gmail.com) - North Port.



## Form-Based Code Draft Available for Review

The City of Sarasota has been working on a Form-based code (FBC) to replace the existing land-use planning system for more than three years. The final draft is now available for review on the City of Sarasota's website: <https://www.sarasotafl.gov/government/urban-design-studio>. City staff will

continue to review the drafts throughout upcoming workshops scheduled with the community, Planning Board and City Commission. A Community Introductory Workshop is scheduled to be held Thursday, April 5 at 6 p.m. in the Commission Chambers at City Hall, 1565 First Street. The process is scheduled to conclude in the fall with public hearings with the Planning Board and City Commission.

Neighborhood activists have formed the

civic group STOP to protect citizen input in the development review process. Currently, the use of administrative review in the downtown area codes prevent formal citizen input and feedback on proposed development in the downtown area which has resulted in narrow sidewalks, unrealistic traffic planning and walkability/pedestrian hazards. The new Form-Based Code, currently under consideration, would extend administrative review to other parts of the City. To learn more about STOP, visit <http://www.forqualityprogress.com>.

# The Celery Fields as Catalyst for Planning

BY TOM MATRULLO

[freshstartsarasota@gmail.com](mailto:freshstartsarasota@gmail.com)

In January 2017, a few people, mostly folks who live near the Celery Fields, became aware of a troubling plan. A developer was seeking approval for a special exception and rezoning. He was proposing that a 16-acre, open-air waste processing facility be situated on public land near the celebrated birding and recreation area. On January, 30, 2017, more than 150 people crowded into the large room at the Church of Hope to talk to James Gabbert and his consultant, Bo Medred.

The consistent message of the meeting was a politely formed request: "I have nothing against waste processing -- this is just not the right place for it."

Mr. Gabbert and Mr. Medred left the meeting without offering any prospect of compromise with the people's request. After gaining a qualified recommendation for approval from one county planner, they took their petition to the Planning Commission. On June 1, 2017, the people again showed up and spoke out. Without citing all the reasons why people felt the proposal made no sense, the commission focused on traffic issues and unanimously recommended denial.

By this point it was clear that public opinion ran heavily against them. They were facing a deep, visceral response to their proposal, not from some small organized group, but from a broad spectrum of people who live here precisely because, unlike counties that let mass development machines run amok, Sarasota has traditionally shown a more thoughtful approach to land use.

Gabbert and Medred, however, were not deterred by the unanimous 'no' vote of the planning commission. On August 23, 2017, their waste proposal came before the Board of County Commissioners, who set aside an entire day for the hearing. Other than some remarks about traffic impacts, the latest version of the proposal addressed virtually none of the extensive range of citizens' concerns: impacts on a lovely nature preserve, impacts on surrounding residential land value, impacts on health from massive open-air concrete and yard waste pulverization, impacts on soil and water from wind-blown Chinese drywall, impacts negative to area aesthetics, impacts on 226 species of birds, impacts from noise, impacts on health from wind-blown silica, impacts on the existing two-lane roads, or impacts upon tourism and a coming gateway area - the Fruitville Initiative - readying for construction nearby.

Essentially, Gabbert and Medred made believe that the Celery Fields, the Fruitville Initiative, the nearby neighborhoods and business districts -- and all the people who live, work, and play there -- do not exist. True enough in 1983, when the future land uses for the vacant area were set. Some 300 people attended the board hearing on August 23. They were physicians, planners, architects, scientists, birders, waste plant operators, trucking company executives, and several attorneys-- one of whom had long worked on waste processing planning in Florida. More than 70 spoke. They didn't come because some organization asked them to be there. They came because they sensed that Sarasota County was at a crossroads, with a fateful decision in the balance. They came because they weren't sure their elected leaders shared the same vision of the right thing. They came, held up signs, and spoke with relevant research and heartfelt concern. The gut response to the Waste Processing facility came down to: "This is not



Photo Credit: Allen Mestel, Streetworks Studio

who we Are."

When the public speaking ended, three of the five commissioners agreed that the character of the area had changed. The market for heavy industry on these public lands was no longer there. When the final vote came, Commissioners Hines, Detert, and Caragiulo voted against the waste plant, Commissioners Maio and Moran voted for it. The people won, 3-2.

Sarasota had been very close to a calamitous brink. Without the caring common sense of so many people, each with her or his unique personal perspective, we'd see a waste processing facility today a short distance from an ecological treasure.

Even though the people won this battle, nothing guaranteed that another totally incompatible proposal might not gain official approval. The developers and planners clearly didn't see the Celery Fields area the same way we do. A coalition of more than 50 concerned homeowner associations proposed a process to work with the county. Called Fresh Start, the group would seek compatible uses for three public parcels near the Celery Fields. After representatives met with each of the commissioners independently last fall, the board unanimously voted to work with Fresh Start on proposals for two of the three parcels. The board reserved the third, northwest quadrant (NW) to be rezoned and sold for development, at Commissioner Alan Maio's instigation.

Fresh Start advertised for and has received quite a few proposals and ideas. A select group of citizens with professional backgrounds in planning, land use, environmental science, and architecture, have agreed to act as an advisory panel to review the proposals. Those they feel are viable will be presented at a public roundtable workshop on **April 10th at Fruitville Library at 3pm.**

Fresh start is a small first step toward restoring a legacy of planning with respect for the common good. The hope is that the board will take these proposals and our concerns about an archaic, out-of-touch planning methodology seriously, so that we can move toward a shared sense of purpose. Chief among the improvements we wish to see adopted are:

- An innovative and inclusive public notification process for proposals of significant impact;
- A stronger role for county planning staff in early community consultation;
- A thorough review and updating of "future" land use

designations - some of which are 40 years old, and bear no relevance to areas of the county that have changed and evolved;

- A planning review process that rigorously applies the objectives, goals, and policies of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan to proposed projects - e.g. compatibility and integration with current uses, not with archaic land use designations;

- A return to a more balanced vision of the character of our community, our values, our public common sense.

If the long, strange, episode of Mr. Gabbert's waste plant proposal makes anything clear, it's that Sarasota has severely tilted toward the interests of speculators. The argument that purveyors of outsized, inappropriate projects are "growing our economy" raises a host of questions, and has been critically interrogated by thoughtful commentators including Cathy Antunes, William Zoller, Pat Rounds, Jon Thaxton, Dan Lobeck, Kafi Benz, and Jono Miller among others. We can't afford to ignore the impacts upon roads, flooding, and loss of open spaces upon communities near these giant projects. The proactive approach for these lands near the Celery Fields is one small experiment in bringing back a more open, well-tempered political environment in which a shared vision of the inherent value of our public lands can work for the common good.

Strong support for proactive stewardship will make growth interests answer to our community, rather than vice versa. Call it 'Answerable Growth' -- building on a future land use map that reflects Sarasota's history, character, and legacy. Only then will it be possible to return to the lively and creative community that nurtured the spirits of so many artists, architects, writers, and innovators. Learn more at <https://celeryfields.org>.



# Florida CEED has Sprouted

BY STEPHEN PINNA

Things are looking good for people who want to work collectively – the state of Florida now has its own Cooperative Development Center in the form of the Florida CEED Corp. Standing for Florida Cooperative Empowered Economic Development, the organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit based out of Pinellas Technical College in St. Petersburg with a mandate to serve people throughout the entire state in starting cooperative businesses.

The purpose of a Cooperative Development Center is to provide the technical and professional resources necessary for starting a cooperative business. To that end, Florida CEED will help any would-be cooperators to understand the basics and specifics of running a cooperative, develop a business plan, navigate the initial legal hurdles, and, if applicable, access funding in the form of grants (primarily from the USDA). Although a lot of development money is in agricultural/producer cooperatives, people looking into starting up housing, consumer, and worker cooperatives should take advantage of this service as developers can help bridge the gaps that derail many cooperative plans.

While Florida still does not have any statutes

allowing for the legal structure of cooperatives, the state has several cooperatives operating, with “Florida’s Natural” orange juice being an example of an agricultural cooperative and the Civilization Restaurant in Gainesville being a worker cooperative. Members of Achieva Credit Union should also know that credit unions function as a sort of a cooperative bank. Regardless of their purpose, all cooperatives act on basic principles to promote collective development of members and their community.

The development of Florida CEED has been coupled with the recent adoption of cooperatives as a category in the US Economic Census. This move by the Economic Census to include cooperatives will give more information and help with the development of cooperative ecosystems nationwide.

Cooperatives have a long history internationally and have been promoted by those looking for democratically run workplaces or to develop economically disadvantaged communities. Richard Wolff (of “Economic Update” fame) often promotes worker cooperatives specifically under the notion of “Democracy at Work” and Florida CEED’s roots come from an initial “Democracy at Work” group that formed in the wake of a

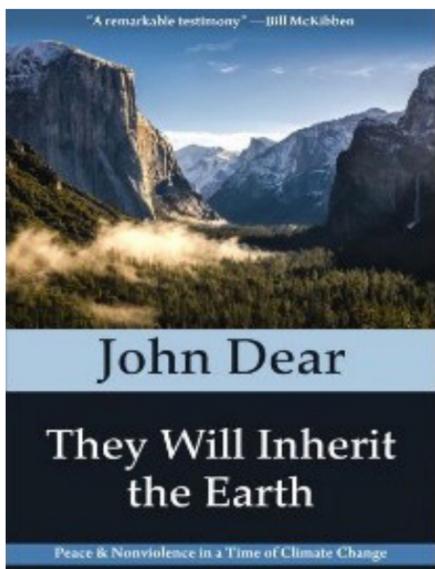


Judith Turner with John Jones

Richard Wolff speaking tour. For those looking to start their own democratic workplace or transition their business to a worker cooperative, Florida CEED should be the first stop.

Florida CEED is run by Judith Turner, a member of the “Cooperation Works!” Cooperative Development Network and a businesswoman with extensive entrepreneurial experience. To contact Florida CEED, go to their website at <http://www.floridaceed.org>, send them an email at [floridaceed@gmail.com](mailto:floridaceed@gmail.com), or give them a call at 727-418-6121.

## Vision of Campaign NonViolence



BY BILL LEWIS

Campaign NonViolence is a long-term movement to build a culture of peace and nonviolence free from war, poverty, racism, environmental destruction, and the epidemic of violence and injustice. How? By mainstreaming nonviolence, connecting issues, and taking action together.

Campaign NonViolence is rooted in an understanding of nonviolence as a force for truth, justice, and the well-being of all. Neither passive nor violent, it is a movement that unleashes creativity, connectedness, and compassion. It is a way of life and a means of transforming the world.

Founded in 1989 by Franciscan Friars in California, Pace e Bene sponsors Campaign Nonviolence. In April, we will welcome Pace e Bene’s Nonviolence Outreach Coordinator, John Dear to Sarasota. Dear is an internationally known voice for peace and nonviolence. He is recognized as an organizer, lecturer, retreat leader, and author/editor of 35 books. In 2008, John was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. A former Jesuit, John is a Catholic priest of the Diocese of Monterey, California and works with the Vatican Nonviolence Initiative.

Dear lives out his commitment to nonviolence in all aspects of his life. He has been arrested over seventy-five times in acts of nonviolent

civil disobedience for peace, and has organized hundreds of demonstrations against war and nuclear weapons at military bases across the country, and has worked with Mother Teresa and others to stop the death penalty.

Dear will be in Sarasota to discuss Campaign NonViolence and present his new book, *They Will Inherit the Earth - Peace and Nonviolence in a Time of Climate Change*. After the presentation he will take questions and sign copies of the book. **An Evening with John Dear will take place on Friday, April 20, 7pm** at the First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1031 S. Euclid Avenue. For more information email [billatpeac@gmail.com](mailto:billatpeac@gmail.com).

### The Campaign NonViolence pledge:

I wholeheartedly pledge to take a stand against violence and to help build a culture of active nonviolence. I will strive to:

- Practice nonviolence toward myself;
- Practice nonviolence toward all others; and
- Practice nonviolence by joining the global movement to abolish war, end poverty and racism, stop the destruction of the earth, and foster a more just, peaceful and nonviolent world for all.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
OF SARASOTA COUNTY  
PRESENTS



Be The One

The Giving Challenge is an exciting 24-hour giving event supporting nonprofits in our community. All donations of \$25-\$100 made online at [www.GivingPartnerChallenge.org](http://www.GivingPartnerChallenge.org) between 12pm, May 1 and 12pm, May 2 will be matched. Some of the organizations we work with and encourage you to support are: **Peace Education and Action Center, WSLR, Transition Sarasota, Florida Veterans for Common Sense, Genesis Health Services, Multicultural Health Institute, Project 180, and the Center for Religious Tolerance.** The 2018 Giving Challenge is presented by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County with giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation.



Community Media & Arts Center  
**Fogartyville**  
West Entrance

Food and beverages are available

525 Kumquat Court, Sarasota  
941-894-6469

8pm, Friday March 30, \$15 in adv./\$20 day of show

Effervescent and engaging, Boston-based fiddler Hanneke's style fuses influences from the Isle of Skye & Cape Breton with Americana grooves and musical innovations, creating a cutting-edge acoustic sound that retains the integrity and spirit of the Scottish tradition. She is accompanied by (her husband) Mike Block on cello.



8pm, Saturday, March 31 \$12 in adv./\$15 day of show

**BILL BUCHMAN'S**



**SEXTET** Benetsito Campoverde, Conga

Featured musicians for the evening:

- Peter Barenbregge, Sax
- Dave DeWitt, Trombone
- Bill Buchman, Piano
- Rob Fors, Bass
- Lennie Balistreri, Drums

7pm, Wednesday April 4 \$15 in adv./\$18 day of show

On *Rolling Stone's 10 New Country Artists You Need to Know* in May 2017.

**Sounds Like:** A global spin on American folk music, performed by a Texas-born Brooklynite who recorded her newest album, *Shanti's Shadow*, on the heels of a meditation-filled retreat to India.

**Why You Should Pay Attention:**

Top-shelf fiddler, merging her Appalachian-fiddle chops with Texas twang, Indian ragas, unfamiliar time signatures and the free-spirited fun of a jam band.



PHOEBE HUNT & THE GATHERERS

8pm, Friday April 6 \$25 in adv./\$30 day of show



**THE SLAMBOVIAN CIRCUS OF DREAMS**

Known for their electrifying live performances, the band plays a moody but upbeat alt-roots rock style with an extensive instrumental arsenal (accordion, cello, mandolin, theremin). Pioneers of the Americana Rock genre, the band's music is equal parts Washington Irving and Woodstock, tapping a broad palette ranging from dusty Americana ballads to huge Pink Floyd-esque cinematic anthems. They've even been called "the Hillbilly Pink Floyd," an apt description, particularly if you throw in elements of Incredible String Band, Neil Young, The Band, Dylan, Bowie and Syd Barrett.

12noon to 8pm, Tuesday April 10



372A St. Armand's Circle, Sarasota 34236

Come out for a **FREE CONE**, some lively entertainment and to help raise funds for **WSLR!**

7pm, Thursday, April 12 \$15 in adv./\$20 day of show



**Yes Darling**

Led by the legendary Ryan Montbleau and commanded by the illustrious Hayley Jane, there is rarely a disagreement or power struggle within the project; wink. Through relentless touring (both on his own and with The R.M.Band) and recording 7 albums, Ryan's

earned a reputation for his melody and a remarkably open-armed approach to songwriting. H.J. is a singer/songwriter and dancer. She commands the stage with style, grace and a dynamic force that brings joy and inspiration.

5pm-9pm Sunday April 22 Earth Day \$12 in adv./\$15 day of show

**WSLR'S GROWING ROOTS**

Community Celebration

An Earth Day celebration of Sarasota's diverse community with *Tuesday Soul School* programmer Troy Nichols' **NEXX Level Band**, a high energy dance band that won't let the party skip a beat!!! And Sarasota's songbirds **Passerine** in alternating sets.

8pm Friday May 4 \$15 in adv./\$18 day of show

HuDost functions as a duo (w/core musicians Moksha Sommer & Jemal Wade Hines) and as a band, including guest musicians of varying sensibilities and backgrounds, and often including dance in their shows. As a duo their instrumentation includes vocals, harmonium (Indian Pump-Organ), NORD Keys, guitars, Dulcinet, percussion, and a slew of sonic ambient effects. Their music is a rich, eclectic blending of Pop and Rock with traditional Sufi music, World, and Folk. Their sound crosses all borders and barriers, taking the listener on a journey they will never forget. **Hot Club SRQ** duo opening show.



**HUDOST**

8pm, Saturday May 5 \$10 in adv./\$12 day of show



**RAMBLING STRING BAND**

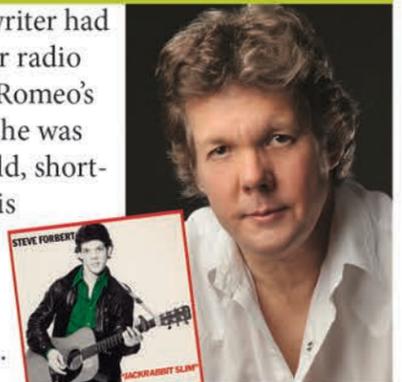
plus **Bill Schustik**

The American Troubadour Carrying on the tradition of old-time, pre-bluegrass string bands and songsters, they raise the roof with traditional folk songs, fiddle tunes, old-time country, bluegrass, Appalachian music, ragtime, blues, spirituals, railroad and cowboy songs, work songs, sea shanties, reels, breakdowns, ballads, and more. Local music historian, Bill Schustik is the embodiment of America's musical history & heritage.

7pm, Sunday May 13 \$20 in adv./\$25 day of show

**STEVE FORBERT**

Singer-songwriter had his first major radio hit in 1979 (Romeo's Tune) when he was only 25yrs old, shortly after moving to New York City from his hometown of Meridian, MS; where he had been working as a truck driver. 35+ years later, he's still writing acclaimed songs and has released 16 studio albums.



FROM THE UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY FILE:



WSLR Founders David Beaton and Arlene Sweeting accept the 2018 Community Service Award from the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of the Gulf Coast of Florida (RPCVGCF). The RPCVGCF organization works to promote peace through cultural exchange and continuing service in our communities at home and internationally. They strive to fulfill the *Third Goal of Peace Corps*: Strengthen Americans' understanding about people and cultures of other countries.

WSLR 96.5 LP FM **mission**

WSLR is an innovative, listener-supported nonprofit, noncommercial FM radio station dedicated to serving the Sarasota community. WSLR features locally produced programming and events that present cultural, artistic and political perspectives currently underrepresented in the media. Our goal is to inform and empower listeners to play an active role in WSLR and in their community. WSLR promotes equality, peace, sustainability, democracy, health, and social and economic justice.

**wslr 96.5 lp fm**

**WEEKLY PROGRAM GUIDE**

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- WBPV 100.1 FM Bradenton

**listen online**

- WSLR.org (desktop)
- WSLR App at wslr.org (mobile)

**listen on demand**

■ [archive.wslr.org](http://archive.wslr.org) Music shows are archived for two weeks. News and public affairs are available for download, and expire later.

Americana · Folk · Cajun · Acoustic · Bluegrass
Blues · Roots · Jazz · R&B · Soul
Electronica · Dubstep · Club · Hip-hop
Freeform · Eclectic
Rock · Punk · Jam · Indie · Pop
News · Public Affairs
World · Spiritual

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
12 mid.	Global Village Syndicated	Beats, Rhymes & Life Radio DJ Cellus	Lumpytunes! The Head Lump, Rob Demperio	Coffee and Donuts Ryan "Ryanito" Larranaga & DJ Cellus	New Radio Jackie	Open A.I.R. Matt Dakan		
1 a.m.							New Radio Aaron	
2 a.m.	MUSIC Automated playlist	Midnight Special Syndicated	Strange Currency Syndicated	Upfront Soul Syndicated	Music Automated playlist			
3 a.m.								
4 a.m.		Letters to Washington Syndicated	Truthdig Radio Syndicated	A Way With Words Syndicated	Economic Update Richard Wolff	Music Automated playlist		
5 a.m.	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated		MUSIC Automated playlist	
6 a.m.								
7 a.m.								
8 a.m.	All Things Rock John	International Americana Syndicated	Soul School Troy Nichols	Blues to Bluegrass John Dickman	Music with a Purpose Pat Monahan	Eclectic Blender Dave Pedersen	Sarasota Shuffle Mr. Boombastic	Celtic Dew Dave Wertman
9 a.m.	ALTERNATE WEEKS							A Love Supreme John Haupt
10 a.m.	Rootstock Radio	Stratosphere	Two Sea Fans	Peace & Justice Report Tom Walker & Bob Connors	The Detail (Rebroadcast) Syndicated	Surreal News Lew Lorini & Steve Norris	Juke In the Back Syndicated	MUSIC Automated playlist
11 a.m.	Body Mind Health Show	Sea Change Radio						Alternative Radio Syndicated
12 noon	Music of the World Marco Ciceron	Latin Alternative Syndicated	Afro Cuban Jazz Frankie Piniero	Vibrational Journeys Perette Cannady	Metropics Carlos Pagan	Complex Waveforms Mark Zampella	Ralph Nader Radio Syndicated	Law and Disorder Syndicated
1 p.m.	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman	The Laura Flanders Show	Folk Alley Syndicated
2 p.m.	Ralph Nader Radio Hour Syndicated	Background Briefing Ian Masters	Letters to Washington Syndicated	Letters To Washington Syndicated	Economic Update Richard Wolff	Jumping Mullet Report WSLR News	BreakBeat Max & Jonah	
3 p.m.	Positive Friction John Haupt	Back Alley Blues Steve Arvey & Friends	Progressive Palace Phil G	Music Museum Ed Foster	Big Willy's Juke Joint	Organic Grooves Ian	De Mush Doctor's Caribbean Rhythms De Mush Doctor	Dadee-O's Collector Corner Dadee-O
4 p.m.		ALTERNATE WEEKS				Second Wind Seany G	Bop & Beyond Bill Ewell	Velvet Hammer Blues Beth Hammer
5 p.m.	From the Mountains & Beyond Tracy Hostetler, Annie	Tuesday Drive Home David Young	Hawaii Bob & Company Hawaii Bob	Dave's Day Off David Beaton	Ted's Head Ted	Friday Happy Hour Bartender Tommy D.		
6 p.m.	Capitol Update State News	Micro-Macro-Enviro-Radio	Talk Nation	Background Briefing	Jumping Mullet Report WSLR News	All Mixed Up Syndicated	Louisiana Gumbo Show Kid Red	
7 p.m.	Short Wave Report	Jumping Mullet Report WSLR News	TUC Radio	Counterspin				
8 p.m.	Yesterday's Dead Today Mark Binder	Lost in the Root Cellar Roger & Peter	New & Blue Session Gary Inganamort	Spirit of Punk Jill Hoffman-Kowal	Velvet Radio Elissa Bello	Indie-licious Shelia, Vin	Ju Ju Jazz Dr. Nik	
9 p.m.				ALTERNATE WEEKS	Ripper's Rarities Russ Yodice			
10 p.m.	Indigenous Sounds White Horse	Music Lagniappe	Mop Tops & The King	Radio Reset Sharon Folta	Indie Files Joel Jaffe	Music Show in Transition	New Radio Anya	Common Threads
11 p.m.		ALTERNATE WEEKS			ALTERNATE WEEKS	Another Late Night Katy		
12 mid.	Beats, Rhymes & Life Radio DJ Cellus	Lumpytunes! The Head Lump, Rob Demperio	Coffee and Donuts Ryan "Ryanito" Larranaga & DJ Cellus	New Radio Jackie	Open A.I.R. Matt Dakan & Jamiel Livingston		Global Village Syndicated	

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generate \$41.5 million for the vouchers in the next year.

- Expansion of charter schools with independent governing boards.

## ELECTION LAW

**Winner:** HB 0085 Voter Registration List Maintenance

- Establishes requirements and processes for Florida to become member of a nongovernmental entity, designed to help states improve the accuracy of their voter rolls through data match identification of problematic registrations and to increase access to voter registration for all eligible citizens.

**Loser:** HJR 7001 Super Majority Vote for State Taxes or Fees

- House Joint Resolution 7001 places an amendment to Florida's Constitution on the 2018 ballot requiring that a state tax or fee imposed, authorized, or raised by the Legislature be approved by two-thirds of the membership of each house of the Legislature.

- The voters have defeated this concept twice already. Hopefully, the third time is truly the charm. This amendment will negatively impact the legislature's ability to raise money for various citizen's needs, such as hurricane response and recovery funding.

## GUN SAFETY

SB 7026 - The Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act was created in the weeks after the February 14th mass shooting in Parkland. The bill, albeit controversial, ushered in the most significant gun safety measures in Florida over the last 20 years — so sweeping that the NRA has already filed a lawsuit challenging the measures.



### Winners:

- Raises the age from 18 to 21 to purchase any gun.
- Imposes a three-day waiting period for the purchase of rifles and other long guns.
- Bans the sale or possession of “bump stocks” which allow semi-automatic rifles to mimic fully automatic weapons.
- Establishes the Risk Protection Order Act, which allows police to petition a court to temporarily seize ammunition and guns for up to a year from a person who “poses a significant danger to himself or others.”
- Creates allocations to assist school districts in establishing or expanding school-based mental health care.

### Losers:

- Fails to ban the purchase of assault weapons, the weapon of choice for most mass shootings.
- Allows specially trained teachers and other (more than 200K) school personnel to be deputized by sheriffs and bring guns to school. School boards and sheriffs would have to agree to implement the program for it to go into effect. Teachers who work “exclusively” in the classroom would be excluded from the program, but those who have additional duties such as drama coaches would be eligible.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

**Winner:** Florida Forever Fund

- The Florida Forever conservation program will receive \$100.8 million, which includes \$5.8 million for the Rural and Family Lands Protection program, \$6 million for recreational park development, \$77 million for acquisition of unique lands, and \$10 for the Florida Communities Trust program, which also includes land buying.

**Loser:** HB 7043 - Wetlands Protection

- Allows the state DEP to assume Federal

Section 404 Dredge and Fill Permitting Authority upon approval of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The state gains power and authority to adopt rules to assume & implement permitting program pursuant to federal Clean Water Act for dredge & fill activities in certain state waters.

- There is not a strong track record of success for states that have tried to self-administer this program, resulting in diminished wetland protection. Florida is expected to suffer a similar impact.

## HEALTH CARE

**Winner:** SB 1890 – Method Ban

- The Senate withdrew this bill on March 10th, a companion bill to HB 1429 passed by the House to ban the abortion procedure called Dilation and Evacuation (D&E). D&E is the most common and safest method of abortion in the second trimester. The bill would have prevented women from having access to a safe abortion with a trusted physician. By dictating what medical procedures doctors can perform, this bill would have prohibited doctors from exercising their best medical judgment and from providing their patients with the appropriate medical care they need.

**Loser:** HB 0041 – Pregnancy Support and Wellness Services (Crisis Pregnancy Centers)

- Permanent contract between Department of Health and the Florida Pregnancy Care Network which runs more than 100 faith-based pregnancy centers. It requires that at least 90 percent of the funding for the centers be used on pregnancy support and wellness.

- These centers are known in part for their billboards on state highways, providing medically inaccurate information, and religious material. We anticipate that the centers will be emboldened by this legislation and will require greater advocacy diligence to ensure they adhere to the law.

# Brady Campaign Ramping Up Efforts



## CAROL CONYNE RESCIGNO

Since the massacre at a high school in Parkland, FL, the Sarasota chapter of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence has continued and strengthened its efforts. The Bayfront rallies that have taken place every Thursday from 4 to 5 pm for almost six years have been expanded, and more events have been added.

Almost 100 people came out to protest the

day after the shootings. As many as 200 people were there the next week when a tribute to the Parkland victims was included.

Sarasota Brady emails its members once every week to alert them to events and asking them to call their national and state legislators about specific bills.

With the Parkland students galvanized, now is not the time to let up. We need to keep our numbers growing and keep people

at the Bayfront, raising awareness about this issue that affects so many. Over 90 percent of Americans favor comprehensive background checks on all gun purchases. Both Brady and the Coalition back a ban on assault weapons and do not back arming teachers in our public schools.

Please join us on the Bayfront and/or on our email list (reach out to me at [sarasota@bradymail.org](mailto:sarasota@bradymail.org)).

# 2018 Election Season Takes Shape Continued from pg. 1

holds a law degree and has written multiple books. He first won his state House seat in 2014 and was re-elected in 2016. District 17, which includes southern Sarasota County and all or part of eight other counties, is strongly conservative. President Donald Trump carried the district by 27 percentage points. It has nearly 57,000 more registered Republicans than Democrats. The winner of the GOP primary will have a good chance of winning the general election. Steube is known for sponsoring gun rights legislation, but Gonzalez also has filed legislation that appeals to conservatives. Gonzalez sponsored a so-called "religious freedom" bill during the 2016 legislative session that was favored by religious conservatives and sharply criticized by gay rights advocates. Under Gonzalez's legislation, Florida adoption agencies could have turned away same-sex couples for religious reasons and certain businesses in the state would have been able to deny them products or services.

**April Freeman (D)** challenged Tom Rooney in 2016 winning 34% of the vote to his 68%. Her campaign themes highlight safeguarding social security and healthcare for the retired community, and modernizing farming policy.

**William (Bill) Pollard Jr. (D)** is running on a progressive platform. He currently works as a respiratory therapist and is an active member of many community groups, including the Historic Preservation Society and the Highlands County Indivisible Chapter.

## FLORIDA

Florida is one of 36 states that will have the opportunity to elect a new governor in 2018 as Governor Rick Scott is term-limited. All of the cabinet seats are up for election, as are all 120 seats in the Florida House of Representatives, and 20 of the 40 seats in the Florida Senate.

\*NOTE: Contributions figures listed in parentheses come from financial reports filed on 2/28/2018)

## GOVERNOR AND CABINET

### Florida Governor



Republican Adam Putnam; Democrats Gwen Graham, Chris King, Andrew Gillum

The Florida Governor's race is up for grabs this year, as Governor Rick Scott is term limited and expected to jump into the race for US Senate. There will be a primary on both sides of the aisle, with **Philip Levine** and **Gwen Graham leading the Democratic side (polling 12%), followed by Andrew Gillum (9%) and Chris King (2%). On the Republican side, Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam faces off against Ron DeSantis; Speaker of the House Richard Corcoran is also expected to run (recent poll numbers: Putnam 18%, DeSantis 16%, Corcoran 3%). Ron DeSantis, 39, has won the backing of President Donald Trump and billionaire donors across the country. DeSantis attended Yale and Harvard Law, becoming a decorated military lawyer who deployed with the Navy Seals in Iraq and was subsequently elected to Congress (\$602,932).**

**Adam Putnam, 43,** is a fifth-generation Floridian whose family has operated orange groves in Polk County for generations and is serving in his eighth year as state agriculture commissioner. Putnam was first elected to the state Legislature at the age of 22 and has held public office continuously ever since. (\$4,385,389)

**Philip Levine, 55,** was first elected in 2013 and serving his second term as Miami Beach mayor. Levine is reportedly worth \$100 million, after building a company that provides media services to the cruise industry. He's shown he's willing to spend money on a campaign. He spent \$2 million to self-finance his first campaign for mayor and has indicated he'd do so again as a candidate for governor. (\$1,199,891)

**Gwen Graham,** is a former North Florida congresswoman, an attorney, and daughter of former U.S. Sen. Bob Graham. In her campaigns Graham continues her father's tradition of Workdays, spending shifts working alongside Floridians at their jobs. (\$2,445,572)

**Andrew Gillum, 37,** the Tallahassee mayor who took on the gun lobby, is running on a progressive platform, recently debating Richard Corcoran on immigrant rights and sanctuary cities. While a senior at Florida A&M University at age 23, Gillum became the youngest person ever elected to the Tallahassee City Commission. He was elected mayor in August 2014. (\$1,199,482)

**Chris King** is a 38-year-old lawyer, a Winter Park-based developer of affordable housing and senior housing, a Harvard graduate and philanthropist. He describes himself as a 'progressive entrepreneur' and has the ability to self-fund his campaign. (\$2,220,933)

**Randy Wiseman** has filed to run on the Libertarian ticket (\$4,260; \$1000 loan) and Bruce Stanley has filed to represent the Green Party (\$0).

### Attorney General

The race for Attorney General has Ryan Torrens and Sean Michael Shaw vying for the Democratic nomination, while **Jay Fant, Ashley Moody, Ross Spano** and **Frank White** vie for the Republican nomination. **Jay Fant** is a conservative Republican currently serving in the Florida House (District 15). His experience is in administration of the First Guaranty Bank and Trust Company. His past campaign contributions have come from places such as Walt Disney and Realtors Associations. He is a supporter of the constitution and is against "big government," is for tighter border security and religious "liberties." (\$264,875 in contributions/\$750,000 loan)

**Ashley Moody** is a Republican and was a judge on the thirteenth judicial circuit of Florida. She is endorsed by the incumbent Pam Bondi, and is interested in private investment and lower taxes to boost Florida's economy, and wants to crack down on crime. Her biggest campaign contributions are from the Republican Party of Florida. (\$1,345,431)

Bolstered by \$1.5 million of his own money, State Rep. **Frank White** (Pensacola) is also a contender in the race for Attorney General. White is the Chief Financial Officer and General Counsel for the Sansing car dealership group. Frank graduated from Southern Methodist University School Law and was the President of the Federalist Society chapter. (\$1,958,504)

Continued on pg. 10

## Regular Scheduled Activist Meetings

**Ready for 100 Renewable Energy Monthly Meeting** - The Sarasota City Commission committed to 100 percent renewable energy community-wide by 2045 and for municipal operations by 2030. Join these bi-monthly community workshops to help identify and implement strategies to reach this new goal. Held on the last Monday of every month from 6:30-8PM at the R.L Taylor Community Complex, 1845 34th Ave, Sarasota.

**Indivisible Bradenton Pro-gressive (Regular Meeting)** - Meetings held on fourth Tuesday of every month at 6PM to discuss positive action and creating a stand for the honor of ALL people. Located at the Manatee County Democratic Party Headquarters on 435 Cortez Rd W in Bradenton.

**Nation group planning meeting** - This group, originally founded many years ago to discuss articles from The Nation magazine, now meets monthly to discuss current affairs of all types. Held on the first Thursday of every month from 10AM - 12PM. Located at the Sarasota Selby Library on 1st St, Sarasota.

**Citizens Climate Lobby** - Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) recognizes Florida's unique vulnerability to the impacts of climate change as well as the unique opportunities that Florida has for advancing clean energy. They meet on the 2nd Saturday of every month from 12:30-2:30PM at the North Sarasota Library on 2801 Newtown Blvd, Sarasota.

**Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Club General Meeting** - Help our local Sierra Club contribute to sound environmental policy in Manatee County. Meetings occur on the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7-9PM at the Sarasota Garden Club on 1131 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota.

**Florida Veterans for Common Sense General Meeting** - 3rd Thursday of every month at 7pm, Waldemere Fire Station.

**Protect Our Public Schools (POPS) Manasota Monthly Meeting** - 4th Tuesday of every month at 6pm at the North Sarasota Public Library, 2801 Newtown Blvd.. More information: carolmlerner@gmail.com

**Sarasota Chapter of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence** - Vigil on the Sarasota Bayfront, just south of the Unconditional Surrender statue on Thursdays from 4 to 5 pm to show our support for the passage of sensible gun laws.

# 2018 Election Season Takes Shape

Continued from pg. 9

**Ross Spano**, now in his third two-year term in the state House, was the fourth candidate to enter the Republican primary for the seat term-limited Attorney General Pam Bondi will vacate next year (\$106,030). He is an estate planning and probate attorney, and currently serves as chairman on the House criminal justice subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee.

**Ryan Torrens** is an attorney and is refusing campaign contributions from Wall Street in order to advocate for “the people” and their protection from big banks, according to his campaign site. Most of his campaign contributions are from individual donors. (\$90,280)

**Sean Michael Shaw** is a State representative for District 61, covering some of Hillsborough county and the Tampa Bay area. Previously he was Florida’s Insurance Consumer Advocate and is an attorney. (\$71,000)

## Chief Financial Officer

For Chief Financial Officer, incumbent Republican **Jimmy Patronis** faces a challenge from **Jeremy Ring (D)**. **Patronis** served four terms in the Florida House (2004-2016) and is part of a family that has long run the landmark Captain Anderson’s Restaurant in Panama City. Gov. Rick Scott appointed him to the Cabinet post after the resignation of former Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater (\$592,908). **Jeremy Ring** was a member of the Florida Senate from 2012-2016 and used to work as an executive for Yahoo. He is from Broward County and has endorsements from former CFO Alex Sink, U.S. Reps. Ted Deutch, Alcee Hastings, Al Lawson and Darren Soto, and International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). (\$258,798; \$100,000 loan)

## Agriculture Commissioner

The field for Commissioner of Agriculture is a crowded one as Matt Caldwell, Denise Grimsley, Baxter Troutman face off in the Republican primary and Jeffrey Porter, David Walker, and Thomas White, Jr. will run in the Democratic primary.

**Matt Caldwell (R)** is a State Representative and a trained real-estate appraiser. He is a resident of Lee County and a supporter of lowering taxes and hopes to permanently fund the restoration of the Florida Everglades. (\$556,825)

**Denise Grimsley (R)** is a member of the Florida State Senate and served as the Chairwoman of the Florida Petroleum Markets and Convenience Stores Association, a trade organization. Her family has a history in the citrus growing industry. (\$851,716)

**Baxter Troutman (R)** is a former member of the Florida House of Representatives and a citrus grower by trade. He is the grandson of Ben Hill Griffin, Jr., a citrus and cattle magnate of early Florida agricultural history. Troutman leads the field in fundraising due to a \$2.5 million self contribution. He has \$2.7 million on hand, followed by Caldwell with \$1.11 million and Grimsley with about \$910,000.

**Mike McCalister (R)**, a retired Army Colonel, is the latest candidate to jump into the already crowded field. McCalister got some name recognition when he ran for governor in 2010 and when he ran for U.S. Senate in 2012.

**David Walker (D)** is the president of the South Florida Audubon Society and is campaigning on sustainability and the public’s right to food safety. He also supports renewable energy and Everglades restoration. (\$8,414; \$21,000 loan) **Jeffrey Porter**, three-term mayor of Homestead, and **Thomas White**, FAMU Chemistry professor, show no activity in their campaign accounts.

## FLORIDA SENATE

In the 2016 Florida Senate elections, Republicans lost one seat and saw their majority drop from 26-14 to 25-15. The 2016 elections were the first elections held following a court-ordered redrawing of the state Senate map in 2015. A special election was held on September 26, 2017, to decide control of District 40, which was previously held by Frank Artiles (R). Democrat Annette Taddeo won the seat, bringing the chamber breakdown to 24-16. To take control of the Florida Senate in 2018, Democrats would have to gain five seats. Republicans need to gain three seats to have a two-thirds supermajority which would give them the ability to override gubernatorial vetoes.

### State Senate District 23

With the resignation of **Greg Steube** to run for Congress, **Joe Gruters**, 40, has announced that he will run to fill Florida’s Senate District 23 seat, which covers Sarasota County and part of Charlotte. Gruters is currently serving as State representative in District 73, he is also the chair of the Sarasota Republican party, the former co-chairman of President Donald Trump’s Florida campaign, and the former vice chairman of the Republican Party of Florida.

The District 23 Senate seat leans Republican. Trump carried it by double digits. Most high-profile Republican leaders in the region are behind Gruters, including Buchanan, Steube, four of the five Sarasota County commissioners, Sheriff Tom Knight and many others.

Democrats say they have a number of individuals considering running for the Senate seat, but none have filed paperwork yet.

## FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

In the 2016 election, Republicans lost two seats and saw their majority drop from 81-38 to 79-41 in the Florida House. Since 80 members are required to override gubernatorial vetoes, Republicans need to gain one seat in 2018 to reclaim a veto-proof majority. Control of the Florida House was not competitive in 2016 with 55 of 120 seats contested by just one party. Twenty-six of these elections were won by Democrats and 29 were won by Republicans. Sixteen elections had a margin of victory of less than 10 percent. Democrats won four of these elections and Republicans won 12.

### State House District 70

District 70 is comprised of parts of Manatee, Sarasota, Pinellas and Hillsborough counties and is a safe Democratic seat. About 45 percent of the population is black, and 15 percent is Hispanic. Incumbent **Wengay Newton (D)** has drawn two challengers – **Keisha Bell** and **Vito Sheeley**. Vito Sheeley is a former congressional aide to both Kathy Castor and Charlie Crist and has been endorsed by

a number of high profile St. Petersburg Democrats. Keisha Bell is a St. Petersburg attorney and civic activist Keisha Bell. As of 2/28/2018, Newton had raised \$19,420, Vito had raised \$8590, and Bell had \$4870 in her campaign coffers.

### State House District 71

District 71 includes western Manatee County and a small portion of northern Sarasota County. The seat currently is held by GOP Rep. **Jim Boyd**, who can’t run again because of term limits. **Will Robinson (R)** and **Randy Cooper (D)** have filed to run. Robinson, age 41, practices real estate law at the Blalock Walters law firm in downtown Bradenton, and sits on the Manatee Chamber of Commerce board of directors and the Lakewood Ranch Medical Center Board of Governors. Cooper, 60, is a civil engineer with a degree from the University of South Florida. He has served three terms as a commissioner with the West Manatee Fire Rescue District. As of 2/28/2018, Robinson had raised \$174,475 and loaned the campaign \$90,000. Cooper had raised \$7150 in contributions and loaned his campaign \$15,000. Bradenton attorney **Tracy Pratt (D)** will also be filing to run.

### State House District 72

Incumbent **Margaret Good** will face a strong challenger in **Ray Pilon**, who served in the Florida House from 2010-2016, before losing to Greg Steube in his run for the Florida Senate. Pilon beat Democrat **Greg Para** with 58 percent of the vote in 2014, and in 2012 he defeated Democrat **Liz Alpert** 54-46. In 2010 he scored a 3-point victory over Democrat **Keith Fitzgerald** in the old House District 69. While serving in the Florida House, Pilon sometimes bucked GOP leadership and his voting record includes opposition to pro-gun and anti-abortion bills. Libertarian **Alison Foxall** has also filed to run for the seat.



Liv Coleman, Tommy Gregory

### State House District 73

With Rep. Gruters stepping down to run for the State Senate, a number of Republicans have been exploring running for his state House seat, including Lakewood Ranch Republican Club President **Steve Vernon** and Manatee County Commissioner **Vanessa Baugh**. However, political newcomer Sarasota attorney **Tommy Gregory**, 46, is the first Republican to file for this seat. He is a former Air Force JAG officer and currently works for the Williams Parker law firm. In 2016, Gruters narrowly defeated Vernon in the Republican primary to win the seat.

Bradenton resident **Liv Coleman**, a political science professor at the University of Tampa, already has filed to run as a Democrat for the House seat. Coleman has raised \$10,579 and loaned her campaign

\$5000. The District 73 seat covers eastern Manatee County and part of eastern Sarasota County.

#### State House District 74

Realtor **James Buchanan**, recently defeated by Margaret Good for the District 72 seat, has filed to run for the District 74 seat and will be the clear favorite in this conservative district. North Port Republican **Nicholas Trolli**, 56, and Democrat **Yves Junior Chery**, 32, have also filed to run for the House District 74 seat, which has been held by Julio Gonzalez since 2014. HD 74 covers part of Sarasota County including Venice, North Port and Englewood.

#### SARASOTA COUNTY COMMISSION



Ruta Marie Jouniari, Christian Ziegler

Two seats are up for election on the County Commission in 2018. In Sarasota, even though Commission candidates run from a particular district, all seats are elected Countywide. There is an outside chance that a special election might take place in June which would impact the way our Commissioners are elected this year. Spearheaded by the Sarasota Alliance for Fair Elections, a petition drive is currently underway to implement single member district voting.

Incumbent **Paul Caragiulio** will not be running for re-election in District 2. **Christian Ziegler**,

34, current state committeeman for the Sarasota Republican Party and former legislative assistant and digital director for U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Longboat Key, was the first candidate to file in this race. Perennial candidate **Alexandra Coe (R)** also filed to run, but it appears she may withdraw from the race to pursue her PhD. **Ruta Marie Jouniari (D)** who challenged Margaret Good for the District 72 seat has now shifted her focus to the County Commission race and will challenge Ziegler in the fall.



Alan Maio, Wesley Beggs, Lourdes Ramirez

Commissioner **Al Maio** has filed to run for re-election in District 4. He will be challenged by **Lourdes Ramirez**, past president of both the Siesta Key Association and the Sarasota County Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA). In the 2014 Republican primary for the District 4 seat, Maio defeated Ramirez with 69.56% of the vote. Newcomer **Wesley Beggs**, a New College graduate and PR professional, has filed to run as a Democrat. Mike Cosentino, active in the fight to Reopen Beach Road, has also expressed interest in running for this seat.

#### SARASOTA SCHOOL BOARD

There are three seats up for election on the Sarasota School Board in 2018. **Bridget Ziegler** is expected to defend her District 1 seat. She has yet to draw a challenger.

Incumbent **Shirley Brown**, a board member since 2006, has filed for re-election in the District 4 seat. School Financial Advisory Committee member **Paula Ippolito** has not filed, but is expected to challenge Brown for the District 4 seat. In District 5, **Pamela Gavette** will run against **Jane Goodwin**, the board's vice chair and a former teacher. Gavette is a Venice substitute teacher with two children in Sarasota County Schools.

Sarasota School Board elections are county-wide. District 4 encompasses downtown Sarasota and Siesta Key, and District 5 is in south county, encompassing North Port and Englewood. District 1 is the area north of Fruitville Road.

#### QUALIFYING DATES

The qualifying period ends for U.S. Senator, U.S. Representative, judicial, state attorney and public defender candidates on noon, May 4, 2018. Qualifying ends for all statewide, multi-county, county, and district candidates on noon, June 22, 2018. The primary election will take place on Tuesday, August 28 so the time is now to learn more about the candidates and get involved to support the candidates you want to see make it on the ballot on November 6th.

## Progressive Sarasota Members Attend Florida Healthcare Summit

BY CLAIRE SNYDER-HALL

Several members of Progressive Sarasota drove down to West Palm Beach for the February 16-17 Florida Healthcare Summit. The over 300 attendees gathered at a hotel just minutes from Mar-a-Lago, as a large group rallied to protest Trump, hold signs, and chant "healthcare is a human right".

The Summit provided an opportunity to learn more about Medicare for All and to speak with candidates running for office in 2018, including Attorney General candidate Ryan Torrens, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture candidate R. David Walker, Congressional candidate Jan Schneider, and congressional challenger to Debbie Wasserman Schultz Tim Canova, among others.

Nina Turner, President of Our Revolution, attended the summit as one of its headliners. After the rally on Friday night, she gave a rousing keynote address that brought most of the room to their feet. Chanting "Not just any ol' Blue will do!", she encouraged support for progressive candidates and policies in November. Turner returned on Saturday morning to moderate a panel on women's healthcare.

The Saturday program also featured a plenary session with Michael Lighty, Director of Public Policy for National Nurses United (NNU), who invigorated the crowd with his inspiring remarks. Progressive Sarasota members Claire Snyder-Hall, Mikki Snyder-Hall, and Kurt Bateman met with regional NNU leaders and Sarasota



Michelle Nungester, Mikki Snyder-Hall, Claire Snyder-Hall, Libby Devlin and Kurt Bateman at the Florida HealthCare Summit.

organizers for a strategy session.

Their goal is to make Medicare for All the most important issue going into the 2020 elections. Their strategy involves building partnerships and coalitions with teachers' unions and school boards throughout the state. School districts are expected to save a lot of money if Medicare for All passes. The Sarasota County School District could save nearly \$23 million per year. All school districts in Florida could collectively save more than \$1.2 billion.

Overall, it was a great weekend – even

if attendees did have to mingle with Secret Service agents at the bar. Many progressive organizations worked to make the Summit possible, including Progressive Democrats of America, Our Revolution, National Nurses United, Communications Workers of America, Healthcare NOW, Social Security Works, and the National Organization for Women.

If you would like to join the Progressive Sarasota Medicare for All team, please email Claire Snyder-Hall at [claire.snyderhall@gmail.com](mailto:claire.snyderhall@gmail.com).

# Municipal Internet For All

BY ROGER DEHUS AND  
JOHANNES WERNER

In Sarasota, Hurricane Irma had fizzled to tropical-storm strength. Even so, fragile power and Internet/TV lines dangling between utility poles left thousands of homes and hundreds of small businesses without power for more than a week, and without an Internet signal for more than two weeks. Comcast crews were clearly outmatched by nature, and overworked customer service agents were not helpful. Adding insult to injury, the bills kept rolling in reliably.

Comcast and Frontier will not divulge when or whether underground fiber optic service might become available. These companies do not appear to care about providing reliable storm-resistant service to our county. They only appear to be interested in profit over service. Worse, many county residents do not have access to fiber optic service or don't even have a choice of Internet Service Provider.

Most neighborhoods in Sarasota are devoid of competition when it comes to Internet Service Providers (ISPs). And it shows. Comcast cable customers are used to blackouts, often lasting several hours per month. Meanwhile, the customer service for Frontier's DSL and fiber optic services leaves much to be desired. And both providers are costly, particularly for businesses, which often get hyped-up residential service at more than double the price.\*

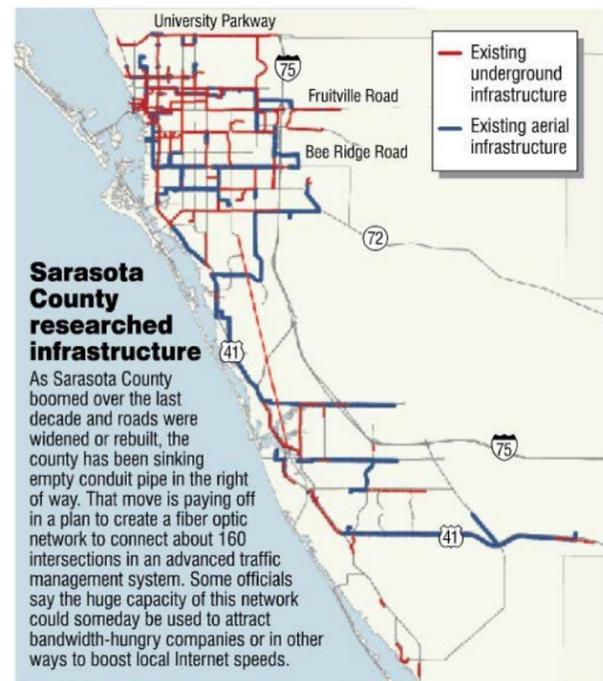
It doesn't have to be that way. Hundreds of municipalities in the United States have taken up the challenge and expanded their utilities to provide Internet service, and the City of Sarasota should join them.

Take Chattanooga's city-owned electric utility, which built the nation's first citywide gigabit network. The Tennessee city's residents get a signal about 100 times faster than the average connection today. Fifty-five municipal networks serving 108 communities throughout the United States offer Internet service by way of a publicly owned fiber optic network, making them and their residents and businesses more competitive.

Not surprisingly, the big cable and telephone companies do not like municipal competition; so they have lobbied states to restrict the right of local governments to get involved in this essential service. In Florida, they scored statute 350.81, which imposes taxes on municipal ISPs and requires them to be profitable within four years — near-impossible when large capital investments are required. Neither the taxes nor these draconic rules, by the way, apply to private-sector businesses.

Even so, there are cities in Florida that offer, or are edging towards, municipal broadband. Valparaiso in the panhandle, population 18,000, offers Internet through its citywide Valparaiso Broadband cable network. And Gainesville's city utility GRU is an ISP to multifamily housing customers through a fiber optic network called GatorNet.

Sarasota is well positioned to become a cutting-edge city with a potential hybrid fiber/wireless Internet Service. For one, a county-owned fiber network that coordinates traffic lights is already embedded under more than 100 miles of thoroughfares; the system is particularly dense in the city of Sarasota. For a bargain basement price of \$1,000 per mile, this infrastructure could be expanded



SARASOTA HERALD TRIBUNE / JENNIFER F. A. BORRESEN

as the backbone for a system to provide superfast Internet Service, reaching into neighborhoods via fiber or meshed wireless systems. Finally, at least one city commissioner is sympathetic, and city staff is not brushing off the idea.

But commissioners and city engineers need to hear from citizens to get going; it will take a movement to make this a reality. So join the Municipal Internet for All website and Facebook page to let us know you are interested. Our first meeting will be held on **April 7**. For location and more details, contact us at [sarasotafiber@gmail.com](mailto:sarasotafiber@gmail.com).

\*Residential monthly fees of \$40 or more, and commercial rates exceeding \$100.

# Women in Film: Powerful Voices for Change

BY CHRIS SERIO MARTIN  
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Gulf Coast Chapter

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Nadia Murad, a survivor of ISIS sexual slavery, pleads with the world: Have we become

indifferent to refugees? This brave young woman earnestly repeats and repeats her horrific story to international advocacy groups, “trying to get the world to notice and do Something.”

Her fight for justice is told in the documentary film “On Her Shoulders.” Directed by Alexandria Bombach, the film won the Documentary Directing Award at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival. In

April, The Through Women’s Eyes International Film Festival (TWE) will bring this powerful film to Sarasota.

Murad, who survived the 2014 genocide of the Yazidis in Northern Iraq and escaped sexual slavery at the hands of ISIS, becomes the voice of her people. At the age of 23, she testifies before the U.N. Security Council - a bold move that made her the face of the Yazidis, a historically persecuted and voiceless religious minority. Murad was nominated for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize and named the first UN Goodwill Ambassador for Human Trafficking.

“On Her Shoulders” is one of six feature-length and 19 short films selected for

TWE. Every year, TWE presents the best in new, groundbreaking films about brave, heroic women produced by established and emerging female filmmakers from around the world. Another outstanding film in this year’s TWE festival, “Half the Picture,” is a timely documentary about women filmmakers and the sexual harassment and sexism they overcome to bring their art and their message to the screen. Women directors, such as Ava DuVernay, Lena Dunham, and Rosanna Arquette, share stories about their career paths, struggles and hopes for the future.

The 19th Annual Through Women’s Eyes Film Festival takes place **Saturday, April 14, and Sunday, April 15**, at the Regal Hollywood Stadium 20, 1993 Main St., Sarasota. Tickets and a complete schedule of exciting films are available at [www.throughwomenseyes.com](http://www.throughwomenseyes.com).

Movies are a powerful tool for change because they create awareness, educate, and advocate. Attending TWE and watching these inspiring films fuels positive change for women around the globe: TWE raises valuable funds for the United States National Committee for UN Women. UN Women takes action by advocating for women’s participation in leadership, cultivating economic opportunities, and stopping gender-based violence and discrimination. For more information about the Gulf Coast Chapter, go to <https://www.unwomen-usnc.org/gccaboutus>.

